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SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM ART HANDBOOKS.

EDITED BY WILLIAM MASKELL.

NO. 1.—TEXTILE FABRICS.

These Handbooks are reprints of the prefaces or introductions to the large catalogues of the chief divisions of works of art in the Museum at South Kensington; arranged and so far abridged as to bring each into a portable shape. The Lords of the Committee of Council on Education having determined on the publication of them, the editor trusts that they will meet the purpose intended; namely, to be useful, not alone for the collections at South Kensington but for other collections, by enabling the public at a trifling cost to understand something of the history and character of the subjects treated of.

The authorities referred to by the authors will be found named in the large catalogues; where are also given detailed descriptions of the very numerous examples in the South Kensington Museum.

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84.

HOOD OF A COPE.

Embroidered by hand in silks & gold with the Adoration of the Magi.
& bordered with green & yellow silk fringe.— English 14th Century.

TEXTILE FABRICS.

BY

THE VERY REV. DANIEL ROCK, D.D.

WITH NUMEROUS WOODCUTS.

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TEXTILES.

CHAPTER I.

UNDER its widest acceptation the word "textile" means every kind of stuff, no matter its material, wrought in the loom. Whether, therefore, the threads are spun from the produce of the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdom; whether of sheep's wool, goats' hair, camels' wool, or camels' hair; whether of flax, hemp, mallow, or the filaments drawn out of the leaves of plants of the lily and asphodel tribes of flowers, or the fibrous coating about pods, or cotton; whether of gold, silver, or of any other metal; the webs from all such materials are textiles. Unlike these are other appliances for garment-making in many countries; and of such materials not the least curious, if not odd to our ideas, is paper, which is so much employed for the purpose by the Japanese. A careful reference to a map of the world will show us the materials which from the earliest ages the inhabitants of the world had at hand, in every clime, for making articles of dress.

In all the colder regions the well-furred skins of several families of beasts could, by the ready help of a thorn for a needle and of the animal's own sinews for thread, be fashioned after a manner into various kinds of clothing.

It grows in a wild state, and is also cultivated. The Thracians make clothing of it very like linen cloth; nor could any person, without being very well acquainted with the substance, say whether this clothing is made of hemp or flax." From "cannabis," its name in Latin, we have taken our word "canvas," to mean any texture woven of hempen thread.

Although flax is to be found growing wild in many parts of Great Britain, it is very doubtful whether for many ages our British forefathers were aware of the use of this plant for clothing purposes: they would otherwise have left behind them some shred of linen in one or other of their many graves. Following, as they did, the usage of being buried in the best of the garments they were accustomed to, or most loved when alive, their bodies would have been found dressed in some small article of linen texture, had they ever worn it.

We must go to the valley of the Nile if we wish to learn the earliest history of the finest flaxen textiles. Time out of mind the Egyptians were famous as well for the growth of flax as for the beautiful linen which they wove out of it, and which became to them a most profitable, because so widely sought for, article of commerce. Their own word "byssus" for the plant itself became among the Greeks, and afterwards among the Latin nations, the term for linens wrought in Egyptian looms. Long before the oldest book in the world was written, the tillers of the ground all over Egypt had been heedful in sowing flax, and anxious about its harvest. It was one of their staple crops, and hence was it that, in punishment of Pharaoh, the hail plague which at the bidding of Moses fell from heaven destroyed throughout the land the flax just as it was getting ripe. Flax grew also upon the banks of the Jordan, and in Judæa generally; and the women of the country, like Rahab, carefully dried it when pulled, and stacked it for future hackling upon the roofs of their houses. Nevertheless, it was from Egypt, as Solomon hints, that the Jews had to draw their fine linen. At a later period,

among the woes foretold to Egypt, the prophet Isaiah warns her that "they shall be confounded who wrought in combing and weaving fine linen."

How far the reputation of Egyptian workmanship in the craft of the loom had spread abroad is shown us by the way in which, besides sacred, heathenish antiquity has spoken of it. Herodotus says, "Amasis king of Egypt gave to the Minerva of Lindus a linen corslet well worthy of inspection:" and further on, speaking of another corslet which Amasis had sent the Lacedæmonians, he observes that it was of linen and had a vast number of figures of animals inwoven into its fabric, and was likewise embroidered with gold and tree-wool. This last was especially to be admired because each of the twists, although of fine texture, contained within it 360 threads, all of them clearly visible.

But we have material as well as written proofs at hand to show the excellence of old Egyptian work in linen. During late years many mummies have been brought to this country from Egypt, and the narrow bandages with which they were found to have been so admirably and, according even to our modern requirements of chirurgical fitness, so artistically swathed have been unwrapped. These bandages are often so fine in their texture as fully to verify the praises of old bestowed upon the beauty of the Egyptian loom-work. We learn from Sir Gardiner Wilkinson that "the finest piece of mummy-cloth, sent to England by Mr. Salt, and now in the British museum, of linen, appears to be made of yarns of nearly 100 hanks in the pound, with 140 threads in an inch in the warp and about 64 in the woof." Another piece of linen, which the same distinguished traveller obtained at Thebes, has 152 threads in the warp and 71 in the woof.

Although from all antiquity upwards, till within some few years back, the unbroken belief had been that such mummy-clothing was undoubtedly made of linen woven out of pure unmixed flax, some writers led, or rather misled, by a few stray words in Herodotus (speaking of the corslet of Amasis, quoted just now)

took that historian to mean wool, and argued that Egyptian textiles wrought a thousand years before were mixed with cotton. While the question was agitated, specimens of mummy-cloth were submitted to the judgment of several persons in the weaving trade deemed most competent to speak upon the matter. Helped only by the fingers' feel and the naked eye, some among them agreed that such textures were really woven of cotton. This opinion was but shortlived. Other individuals, more philosophical, went to work on a better path. In the first place they clearly learned, through the microscope, the exact and never-varying physical structure of both these vegetable substances. They found cotton to be in its fibre a transparent tube without joints, flattened so that its inward surfaces are in contact along its axis and also twisted spirally round its axis; flax on the contrary is a transparent tube, jointed like a cane and not flattened or twisted spirally. Examined in the same way, old samples of byssus or mummy-bandages from Egypt in every instance were ascertained to be of fine unmixed flaxen linen.

CHAPTER II.

For many reasons the history of silk is not only curious but highly interesting. In the earliest ages even its existence was unknown, and when discovered the knowledge of it stole forth from the far east, and straggled westward very slowly. For all that lengthened period during which their remarkable civilization lasted, the older Egyptians probably never saw silk: neither they, nor the Israelites, nor any other of the most ancient kingdoms of the earth, knew of it in any shape, either as a simple twist or as a woven stuff. Not the smallest shred of silk has hitherto been found in the tombs or amid the ruins of the Pharaonic period.

No where does Holy Writ, old or new, tell anything of silk but in one single place, the Apocalypse xviii. 12. It is true that in the English authorized version we read of "silk" as if spoken of by Ezekiel xvi. 10, 13; and again, in Proverbs xxxi. 22; yet there can be no doubt that in both these passages, the word silk is wrong through the translators misunderstanding the original Hebrew. The Hebrew word is not so rendered in any ancient version: and the best Hebraists have decided that silk was not known by the old Israelites. When St. John speaks of it he includes it with the gold, and silver, and precious stones, and pearls, and fine linen and purple which, with many other costly freights, merchants were wont to bring to Rome.

It was long after the days of Ezekiel that silk in its raw form

only, made up into hanks, first found its way to Egypt, western Asia, and eastern Europe.

We owe to Aristotle the earliest notice of the silk-worm, and although his account be incorrect it has much value, because he gives us information about the original importation of raw silk into the western world. Brought from China through India the silk came by water across the Arabian ocean, up the Red Sea, and thence over the isthmus of Suez (or perhaps rather by the overland route, through Persia) to the small but commercial island of Cos, lying off the coast of Asia minor. Pamphile, the daughter of Plates, is reported to have first woven silk in Cos. Here, by female hands, were wrought those light thin gauzes which became so fashionable; these were stigmatized by some of the Latin poets, as well as by heathen moralists, as anything but seemly for women's wear. Tibullus speaks of them; and Seneca condemns them: "I behold" he says "silken garments, if garments they can be called, which are a protection neither for the body nor for shame." Later still, and in the Christian era, we have an echo to the remarks of Seneca in the words of Solinus: "This is silk, in which at first women but now even men have been led, by their cravings after luxury, to show rather than to clothe their bodies."

Looking over very ancient manuscripts we often find between richly gilt illuminations, to keep them from harm or being hurt through the rubbings of the next leaf, a covering of the thinnest gauze, just as we now put sheets of silver paper for that purpose over engravings. It is not impossible that some at least of these may be shreds from the translucent textiles which found favour in the world for so long a time during the classic period. The curious example of such gauzy interleafings in the manuscript of Theodulph, now at Puy en Velay, will occur perhaps to more than one of our readers.

It may be easily imagined that silken garments were brought, at an early period, to imperial Rome. Not only, however, were

the prices asked for them so high that few could afford to buy such robes for their wives and daughters, but, at first, they were looked upon as quite unbecoming for men's wear; hence, by a law of the Roman senate under Tiberius, it was enacted: "Ne vestis serica vicos fœdaret." While noticing how womanish Caligula became in his dress Suetonius remarks his silken attire: "Aliquando sericatus et cycladatus." An exception was made by some emperors for very great occasions, and both Titus and Vespasian wore dresses of silk when they celebrated at Rome their triumph over Judæa. Heliogabalus was the first emperor who wore whole silk for clothing. Aurelian, on the other hand, neither had himself in his wardrobe a garment wholly silk nor gave one to be worn by another. When his own wife begged him to allow her to have a single mantle of purple silk he replied, "Far be it from us to allow thread to be reckoned worth its weight in gold." For then a pound of gold was the price of a pound of silk.

Clothing made wholly or in part out of silk, nevertheless, became every year more and more sought for. So remunerative was the trade of weaving the raw material into its various forms, that, by the revised code of laws for the Roman empire published A.D. 533, a monopoly in it was given to the court, and looms worked by women were set up in the imperial palace. Thus Byzantium became and long continued famous for the beauty of its silken stuffs. Still, the raw silk itself had to be brought thither from abroad; until two Greek monks, who had lived many years among the Chinese, learnt the whole process of rearing the worm. Returning, they brought with them a number of eggs hidden in their walking-staves; and, carrying them to Constantinople, they presented these eggs to the emperor who gladly received them. When hatched the worms were distributed over Greece and Asia minor, and very soon the western world reared its own silk. In some places, at least in Greece, the weaving not only of the finer kinds of cloth but of silk fell into the hands of

the Jews. Benjamin of Tudela, writing in 1161, tells us that the city of Thebes contained about two thousand Jewish inhabitants. "These are the most eminent manufacturers of silk and purple cloth in all Greece."

South Italy wrought rich silken stuffs by the end of the eleventh century; for we are told by our countryman Ordericus Vitalis, who died in the first half of the twelfth century, that Mainerius, the abbot of St. Evroul at Uzey in Normandy, on coming home brought with him from Apulia several large pieces of silk, and gave to his church four of the finest ones, with which four copes were made for the chanters.

From a feeling alive in the middle ages throughout the length and breadth of Christendom, that the best of all things ought to be given for the service of the Church, the garments of its celebrating priesthood were, if not always, at least very often wholly of silk; holosericus. Owing to this fact, we are now able to learn from the few but tattered shreds before us what elegantly designed and gorgeous stuffs the foreign mediæval loom could weave, and what beautiful embroidery our own countrywomen knew so well how to work. These specimens help us also to rightly understand the description of the splendid vestments enumerated with such exactness in the old inventories of our cathedrals and parish churches, as well as in the early wardrobe accompts of our kings, and in the wills and bequests of dignified ecclesiastics and nobility.

Coming westward among us, these much coveted stuffs brought with them the several names by which they were commonly known throughout the east, whether Greece, Asia minor, or Persia. Hence when we read of samit, ciclatoun, cendal, baudekin, and other such terms unknown to trade now-a-days, we should bear in mind that, notwithstanding the wide variety of spelling which each of these appellations has run through, we arrive at their true derivations, and discover in what country and by whose hands they were wrought.

As commerce grew these fine silken textiles were brought to our markets, and articles of dress were made of silk for men's as well as women's wear among the wealthy. At what period the raw material came to be imported here, not so much for embroidery as to be wrought in the loom, we do not exactly know; but from several sides we learn that our countrywomen of all degrees, in very early times, busied themselves in weaving. Among the home occupations of maidens St. Aldhelm, at the end of the seventh century, includes weaving. In the council at Cloveshoo, in 747, nuns are exhorted to spend their time in reading or singing psalms rather than weaving and knitting vainglorious garments of many colours. By that curious old English book the 'Ancren Riwle,' written towards the end of the twelfth century, ankresses are forbidden to make purses or blodbendes (which were narrow strips to bind round the arm after bleeding), to gain friends therewith. Were it not that the weaving especially of silk was so generally followed in the cloister by English women, it had been useless to have so strongly discountenanced the practice.

But on silk weaving by our women in small hand-looms a very important witness, especially about several curious specimens in the great collection at South Kensington, is John Garland, born at the beginning of the thirteenth century in London, where many of his namesakes were and are still known. First, a John Garland, in 1170, held a prebend's stall in St. Paul's cathedral. Another was sheriff at a later period. A third, a wealthy draper of London, gave freely towards the building of a church in Somersetshire. A fourth, who died in 1461, lies buried in St. Sythe's; and, at the present day, no fewer than twenty-two tradesmen of that name, of whom six are merchants of high standing in the city, are mentioned in the London post office directory for the year 1868. We give these instances as some have tried to rob us of John Garland by saying he was not an Englishman, though he has himself told us he was "born in England and brought up in France."

In a kind of short dictionary drawn up by that writer and printed at the end of 'Paris sous Philippe le Bel,' edited by M. Geraud, our countryman tells us that, besides the usual homely textiles, costly cloth-of-gold webs were wrought by women; and very likely, among their other productions, were those blodbendes "cingula" the weaving of which had been forbidden to ankresses and nuns. Perhaps, also, some of the narrow gold-wrought ribbons in the South Kensington collection, nos. 1233, 1256, 1270, 8569, etc., may have been so employed.

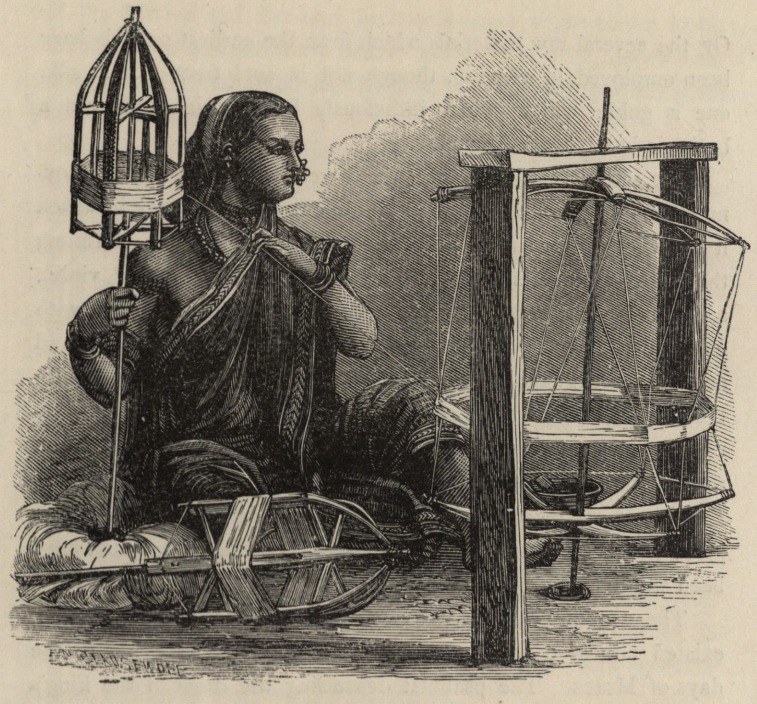
John Garland's "cingula" may also mean the rich girdles or sashes worn by women round the waist, of which there is one example in the same collection, no. 8571. Of this sort is that fine border, amber coloured silk and diapered, round a vestment found in a grave at Durham; which is described by Mr. Raine in his book about St. Cuthbert as "a thick lace, one inch and a quarter broad—evidently owing its origin, not to the needle, but to the loom." In an after period the same bands are shown on statuary, and in the illuminated manuscripts of the thirteenth century: as instances of the narrow girdle, the effigy of a lady in Romney church, Hants and of Ann of Bohemia in Westminster abbey may be referred to; both to be found in Hollis's monumental effigies of Great Britain; for the band about the head, the examples in the wood-cuts in Planchè's British costumes, p. 116.

Specimens of such head bands may be seen at South Kensington, nos. 8569, 8583, 8584, and 8585.

They are, no doubt, the old snôd of the Anglo-saxon period. For ladies they were wrought of silk and gold; women of lower degree wore them of simpler stuff. The silken snood, used in our own time by young unmarried women in Scotland, is a truthful witness to the fashion in vogue during Anglo-saxon and later ages in this country.

The breeding of the worm and the manufacture of its silk spread themselves with steady though slow steps over most of the

countries which border on the shores of the Mediterranean; so that, by the tenth century, those processes had reached from the far east to the uttermost western limits of that sea. Even then, and a long time after, the natural history of the silkworm became known but to a very few. Our countryman Alexander Neckham, abbot of Cirencester A D. 1213, was probably the first who tried to help others to understand the habits of the insect: his brief explanation may be found in his once popular book 'De natura rerum,' which has been lately reprinted by order of the Master of the Rolls.



Indian woman reeling silk from a wheel.

CHAPTER III.

Of the several raw materials which from the earliest periods have been employed in weaving, though not in such frequency as silk, one is gold: which, when judiciously brought in, adds not a barbaric but artistical richness.

The earliest written notice which we have about the employment of this precious metal in the loom, or of the way in which it was wrought for such a purpose, is in the Pentateuch. Among the sacred vestments made for Aaron was an ephod of gold, violet, and purple, and scarlet twice dyed, and fine twisted linen, with embroidered work; and the workman cut also thin plates of gold and drew them small into strips, that they might be twisted with the woof of the aforesaid colours. Instead of "strip," the authorised protestant version says "wire;" the Douay translation reads "thread:" but neither can be right, for both of these English words mean a something round or twisted in the shape given to the gold before being wove, whereas the metal must have been worked in quite flat, as we learn from the text.

The use of gold for weaving, both with linen or by itself, existed almost certainly among the Egyptians long before the days of Moses. The psalmist describing the dress of the king's daughter (that is, Pharaoh's daughter), not only speaks of her being "in raiment of needlework" but that "her clothing is of wrought gold." In order to be woven the precious metal was at

first wrought in a flattened, never in a round or wire shape. To this hour the Chinese and the people of India work the gold into their stuffs after the ancient form. In the same fashion, even now, the Italians weave their lama d'oro, or the more glistening toca: those cloths of gold which to all Asiatic and many European eyes do not glare with too much garishness, but shine with a glow that befits the raiment of personages in high station.

Among the nations of ancient Asia garments made of webs dyed with the costly purple tint, and interwoven with gold, were on all grand occasions worn by kings and princes. So celebrated did the Medes and Persians become in such works of the loom, that cloths of extraordinary beauty got their several names from those peoples, and Medean, Lydian, and Persian textiles were everywhere sought for.

Writing of the wars carried on in Asia and India by Alexander the great almost four centuries before the birth of Christ, Quintus Curtius often speaks about the purple and gold garments worn by the Persians and more eastern Asiatics. Among the many thousands of those who came forth from Damascus to the Greek general, Parmenio, numbers were so clad: "They wore robes splendid with gold and purple." All over India the same fashion was followed in dress. When an Indian king with his two sons came to Alexander, the three were so arrayed. Princes and the high nobility, all over the east, are called by Quintus Curtius "purpurati." Not only garments but hangings were made of the same costly fabric. When Alexander wished to give some ambassadors a splendid reception, the golden couches upon which they lay to eat their meat were screened with cloths of gold and purple; and the Indian guests themselves were not less gorgeously clothed in their own national costume, as they came wearing linen (perhaps cotton) garments equally resplendent.

The dress worn by Darius, as he went forth to do battle, is thus described by the same historian: "the waist part of the royal purple tunic was wove in white, and upon his mantle of

cloth of gold were figured two golden hawks as if pecking at one another with their beaks."

From the east this love for cloth of gold reached the southern end of Italy, and thence soon got to Rome; where, even under its early kings, garments made of it were worn. Pliny, speaking of this rich textile, says: "gold may be spun or woven like wool, without any wool being mixed with it." We are told by Verrius that Tarquinius Priscus rode in triumph in a tunic of gold; and Agrippina the wife of the emperor Claudius, when he exhibited the spectacle of a naval combat, sat by him covered with a robe made entirely of gold woven without any other material. About the year 1840 the marquis Campagna dug up near Rome two old graves, in one of which had been buried a Roman lady of high birth, inferred from the circumstance that all about her remains were found portions of such fine gold flat thread, once forming the burial garment with which she had been arrayed for her funeral.

When pope Paschal, A D. 821, sought for the body of St. Cecily who was martyred in the year 230, the pontiff found the body in the catacombs, whole and dressed in a garment wrought all of gold, with some of her raiment drenched in blood lying at her feet. In making the foundations for the new St. Peter's at Rome the workmen came upon and looked into the marble sarcophagus in which had been buried Probus Anicius, prefect of the Pretorian, and his wife Proba Faltonia, each of whose bodies was wrapped in a winding-sheet woven of pure gold strips. The wife of the emperor Honorius died sometime about the year 400, and when her grave was opened, in 1544, the golden tissues in which her body had been shrouded were taken out and melted, amounting in weight to thirty-six pounds. The late father Marchi also found among the remains of St. Hyacinthus several fragments of the same kind of golden web.

Childeric, the second king of the Merovingean dynasty, was buried A.D. 482, at Tournai. In the year 1653 his grave was

discovered, and amid the earth about it so many remains of pure gold strips were turned up that there is every ground for thinking that the Frankish king was wrapped in a mantle of golden stuff for his burial. We have reason to conclude that the strips of pure gold out of which the burial cloak of Childeric was woven were not round but flat, from the fact that in a Merovingean burial ground at Envermeu the distinguished archæologist Cochet a few years ago came upon the grave once filled by a lady whose head had been wreathed with a fillet of pure golden web, the tissue of which is thus described: "Ces fils aussi brillants et aussi frais que s'ils sortaient de la main de l'ouvrier, n'étaient ni étirés ni cordés. Ils étaient plats et se composaient tout simplement de petites lanières d'or d'un millimètre de largeur, coupée à même une feuille d'or épaisse de moins d'un dixième de millimètre. La longeur totale de quelques-uns atteignait parfois jusqu'à quinze ou dix-huit centimètres."

Our own country can furnish an example of this kind of golden textile. On Chessel down, in the isle of Wight, when Mr. Hillier was making some researches in an old Anglo-saxon place of burial, the diggers found pieces of gold strips, thin and quite flat, which are figured in M. l'abbé Cochet's learned book just mentioned. Of the same rich texture must have been the vestment given to St. Peter's at Rome in the middle of the ninth century, and described in the Liber Pontificalis as made of the purest gold, and covered with precious stones: "Carolus rex sancto Apostolo obtulit ex purissimo auro et gemmis constructam vestem, etc."

Such a weaving of pure gold was, here in England, followed certainly as late as the beginning of the tenth century; very likely much later. In the chapter library belonging to Durham cathedral may be seen a stole and maniple, which bear these inscriptions: "Ælfflaed fieri precepit. Pio episcopo Fridestano." Fridestan was consecrated bishop of Winchester A. D. 905. With these webs under his eye, Mr. Raine writes thus: "In the first,

the ground work of the whole is woven exclusively with thread of gold. I do not mean by thread of gold, the silver-gilt wire frequently used in such matters, but real gold thread, if I may so term it, not round, but flat. This is the character of the whole web, with the exception of the figures, the undulating cloud-shaped pedestal upon which they stand, the inscriptions and the foliage; for all of which, however surprising it may appear, vacant spaces have been left by the loom, and they themselves afterwards inserted with the needle." Further on, in his description of a girdle, the same writer tells us: "Its breadth is exactly seven-eighths of an inch. It has evidently proceeded from the loom; and its two component parts are a flattish thread of pure gold, and a thread of scarlet silk." Another very remarkable piece, a fragment (probably) of a stole, was also found lately at Durham in the grave of bishop Pudsey, who was buried about the middle of the twelfth century. This was exhibited at the Society of antiquaries, in the present year, 1875. It is made of rich silk, with a diaper pattern in gold thread.

This love for such glittering attire, not only for sacred use but secular wear, lasted long in England. The golden webs went under different names; at first they were called "ciclatoun," "siglaton," or "siklatoun," as the writer's fancy led him to spell the Persian word common for them at the time throughout the east.

By the old English ritual plain cloth of gold was allowed, as now, to be used for white when that colour happened to be ordered by the rubric. Thus in the reign of Richard the second, among the vestments at the chapel of St. George, Windsor castle, there was "one good vestment of cloth of gold:" and St. Paul's, London, had at the end of the thirteenth century two amices embroidered with pure gold.

This splendid web was often wrought so thick and strong that each string, whether it happened to be of hemp or of silk had in the warp six threads, while the weft was of flat gold shreds. Hence such a texture was called "samit," a word shortened from

its first and old Byzantine name "exsamit." The quantity of this costly cloth kept in the wardrobe of Edward the first was so great, that the nobles of that king were allowed to buy it out of the royal stores; for instance, four pieces at thirty shillings each were sold to Robert de Clifford, and another piece at the same price to Thomas de Cammill. Not only Asia minor but the island of Cyprus, the city of Lucca, and Moorish Spain, sent us these rich tissues. With other things left at Haverford castle by Richard the second were twenty-five cloths of gold of divers suits, of which four came from Cyprus, the others from Lucca: "xxv. draps d'or de diverses suytes dount iiii. de *Cipres* les autres de *Lukes*." How Edward the fourth liked cloth of gold for his personal wear may be gathered from his wardrobe accounts, edited by Nicolas; and the lavish use of this stuff ordered by Richard the third for his coronation is recorded in the Antiquarian Repertory.

A "gowne of cloth-of-gold, furred with pawmpilyon, ayenst Corpus Xpi day" was bought for Elizabeth of York, afterwards queen of Henry the seventh, for her to wear as she walked in the procession on that great festival. The affection shown by Henry the eighth and all our nobility, men and women, of the time, for cloth of gold in their garments was unmistakingly set forth in many of the paintings brought together in the very instructive exhibition of national portraits in 1866, in the South Kensington museum. The price of this stuff seems to have been costly; for princess (afterwards queen) Mary, thirteen years before she came to the throne, "payed to Peycocke, of London, for xix yerds iii. qr̃t of clothe of golde at xxxviij.s̃ the yerde, xxxvij*li.* x*s.* vj*d.*" And for "a yerde and d^{r} qr̃t of clothe of siluer xl*s.*"

As between common silk and satin there runs a broad difference in appearance, one being dull, the other smooth and glossy, so there is a great distinction to be made among cloths of gold; some are, so to say, dead; others, brilliant and sparkling. When the gold is twisted into its silken filament it takes the deadened

look; when the flattened, filmy strip of metal is rolled about it so evenly as to bring its edges close to one another, it seems to be one unbroken wire of gold, sparkling and lustrous. This kind during the middle ages went by the term of Cyprus gold; and rich samits woven with it were called damasks of Cyprus.

As time went on cloths of gold had other names. What the thirteenth century called, first, "ciclatoun," then "baudekin," afterward "nak," was called, two hundred years later, "tissue": a bright shimmering golden textile. The very thin smooth paper which still goes by the name of tissue-paper was originally made to be put between the folds of this rich stuff to prevent fraying or tarnish, when laid by.

The gorgeous and entire set of vestments presented to the altar at St. Alban's abbey, by Margaret, duchess of Clarence, A. D. 1429, and made of the cloth of gold commonly called "tyssewys," must have been as remarkable for the abundance and purity of the gold in its texture, as for the splendour of the precious stones set on it and the exquisite beauty of its embroideries. The large number of vestments made out of gold tissue, and of crimson, light blue, purple, green, and black, once belonging to York cathedral, are all duly registered in the valuable "Fabric rolls" of that church lately published by the Surtees society.

Among the many rich and costly vestments in Lincoln cathedral, some were made of this sparkling golden tissue contradistinguished in its inventory from the duller cloth of gold, thus: "Four good copes of blew tishew with orphreys of red cloth of gold, wrought with branches and leaves of velvet;" "a chesable with two tunacles of blew tishew having a precious orphrey of cloth of gold."

Silken textures ornamented with designs in copper gilt thread were manufactured and honestly sold for what they really were: of such inferior quality we find mention in the inventory of vestments at Winchester cathedral, drawn up by order of Henry the

eighth, where we read of "twenty-eight copys of white bawdkyne, woven with copper gold." Another imitation of woof of gold was possibly fraudulent. This, originally perhaps Saracenic, was practised by the Spaniards of the south, and was not easily discovered. The very finest skins were sought out for the purpose, as thin as that now rare kind of vellum called "uterine" by collectors of manuscripts. These were heavily gilt and then cut into very narrow strips, to be used instead of the true golden thread.

The gilding of fine silk and canvas in imitation of cloth of gold, like our gilding of wood and other substances, was also sometimes resorted to for splendour's sake on temporary occasions; such, for instance, as some stately procession or a solemn burial service. Mr. Raine tells us he found in a grave at Durham, among other textiles, "a robe of thinnish silk; the ground colour of the whole is amber; and the ornamental parts were literally covered with *leaf gold*, of which there remained distinct and very numerous portions." In the churchyard of Cheam, Surrey, in 1865, the skeleton of a priest was found who had been buried some time during the fourteenth century; around the waist was a flat girdle made of brown silk that had been gilt. In the 'Romaunt of the rose' translated by Chaucer, dame Gladnesse is thus described:—

> —in an over gilt samite
> Clad she was;

and on a piece of German orphrey-web, in the South Kensington collection, no. 1373, and probably made at Cologne in the sixteenth century, the gold is laid by the gilding process.

Silver also, as well as gold, was hammered out into very thin sheets which were cut into narrow long shreds to be woven, unmixed with anything else, into a web for garments. Of this we have a striking illustration in the Acts of the apostles, where St. Luke, speaking of Herod Agrippa, says that he presented himself to the people arrayed in kingly apparel, who, to flatter him,

shouted that his was the voice not of a man but of a god; and forthwith he was smitten by a loathsome disease which shortly killed him. This royal robe, as Josephus informs us, was a tunic made of silver and wonderful in its texture.

Intimately connected with the raw materials, and how they were wrought in the loom, is the question about the time when wire drawing was found out. At what period and among what people the art of working up pure gold, or gilded silver, into a long, round, hair-like thread—into what may be correctly called "wire"—began, is quite unknown. That with their mechanical ingenuity the ancient Egyptians bethought themselves of some method for the purpose is not unlikely. From Sir Gardiner Wilkinson we learn that at Thebes were found objects which appeared to be made of gold wire. We may fairly presume that the work upon the corslets of king Amasis, already spoken of as done by the needle in gold, required by its minuteness that the metal should be not flat but in the shape of wire. By delicate management perhaps of the fingers, the narrow flat strips might have been pinched or doubled up so that the two edges should meet, and then rubbed between two pieces of hard material a golden wire of the required fineness would be produced. In Etruscan and Greek jewellery wire is often to be found; but in all instances it is so well shaped and so even that it must have been fashioned by some rolling process. The filigree work of the middle ages is often very fine and delicate. Probably the embroidery which we read of in the descriptions of the vestments belonging to our old churches (for instance "An amice embroidered with pure gold") was worked with gold wire. To go back to Anglo-saxon times in this country, such gold wire would seem to have been then well known and employed, since in Peterborough minster there were two golden altar-cloths: "ii. gegylde þeofad sceatas;" and there were at Ely cathedral "two girdles of gold wire" in the reign of William Rufus.

The first use of a wire-drawing machine seems to have been

about the year 1360, at Nuremberg ; and it was not until two hundred years after, in 1560, that the method was brought to England. Two examples of a stuff with pure wire in it may be seen in the South Kensington collection, nos. 8581 and 8228.

The process of twining long narrow strips of gold, or gilt silver, round a line of silk or flax and thus producing gold thread is much earlier than has been supposed ; and when Attalus's name was bestowed upon a new method of interweaving gold with wool or linen, thence called "Attalic," it was probably because he suggested to the weaver the introduction of the long-known golden thread as a woof into the textiles from his loom. It would seem, from a passage in Claudian, that ladies at an early Christian period used to spin their own gold thread. Writing at the end of the fourth century, the poet thus compliments Proba :

> The joyful mother plies her learned hands,
> And works all o'er the trabea golden bands,
> Draws the thin strips to all their length of gold,
> To make the metal meaner threads enfold.

The superior quality of some gold thread was known to the mediæval world under the name of the place where it had been made. Thus we find mention at one time of Cyprus gold thread; "a vestment embroidered with eagles of gold of Cyprus :" later, of Venice gold thread, "for frenge of gold of Venys at vj*s.* the ounce;" and again, "one cope of unwatered camlet laid with strokes of Venis gold." What may have been their difference cannot now be pointed out: perhaps the Cyprian thread was esteemed because its somewhat broad shred of flat gold was wound about the hempen twist beneath it so nicely as to have the smooth unbroken look of gold wire ; while the manufacture of Venice showed everywhere the twisting of common thread.

CHAPTER IV.

In earlier times, as at present, silks had various names, distinguishing either their kind of texture, their colour, the design woven on them, the country from which they were brought, or the use for which, on particular occasions, they happened to be especially set apart.

All these designations are of foreign growth; some sprang up in the seventh and following centuries at Byzantium; some are half Greek, half Latin, jumbled together; others, borrowed from the east, are so shortened, so badly and variously spelt, that their Arabic or Persian derivation can be hardly recognized at present. Yet without some slight knowledge of them we hardly understand a great deal belonging to trade, and the manners of the times glanced at by old writers; much less can we see the true meaning of many passages in our mediæval English poetry.

Among the terms significative of the kind of web, or mode of getting up some sorts of silk, we have *Holosericum*, the texture of which is warp and woof wholly pure silk. From a passage in Lampridius we learn that so early as the reign of Alexander Severus the difference between "vestes holosericæ" and "subsericæ" was strongly marked, and that *subsericum* implied that the texture was not entirely but in part, probably the woof, of silk.

Examitum, *xamitum*, or, as it is called in old English documents, *samit*, is made up of two Greek words, ἑξ, "six," and μίτοι,

"threads;" the number of the strings in the warp of the texture. It is evident that stuffs woven so thick must have been of the best quality. Hence, to say of any silken tissue that it was "examitum" or "samit" meant that it was six-threaded, and therefore costly and splendid. At the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries "examitum" was much used for vestments in Evesham abbey, as we gather from the chronicle of that house, published lately for the Master of the Rolls. About the same period among the best copes, chasubles, and vestments in St. Paul's, London, many were made of samit. So, again among the nine gorgeous chasubles bequeathed to Durham cathedral by its bishop in 1195, the chief was of red samit superbly embroidered. And, to name no more, we find in the valuable inventory, lately published, of the rich vestments belonging to Exeter cathedral in 1277 that the best of its numerous chasubles, dalmatics, and copes, were made of samit. In a later document, A. D. 1327, this precious silk is termed "samicta."

The poets did not forget to array their knights and ladies in this gay attire. When Sir Lancelot of the lake brought back Gawain to king Arthur:

> Launcelot and the queen were cledde
> In robes of a rich wede,
> Of samyte white, with silver shredde:
> * * * * *
> The other knights everichone,
> In samyte green of heathen land,
> And their kirtles, ride alone.

In his 'Romaunt of the rose,' Chaucer describes the dress of Mirth thus:

> Full yong he was, and merry of thought
> And in samette, with birdes wrought,
> And with gold beaten full fetously,
> His bodie was clad full richely.

Many of the beautifully figured damasks in the South Kensing-

ton collection are what anciently were known as "samits;" and if they really be not six-thread, according to the etymology of their name, it is because at a very early period the stuffs so called ceased to be woven of such a thickness.

The strong silks of the present day with the thick thread called "organzine" for the woof, and a slightly thinner thread known by the technical name of "tram" for the warp, may be taken to represent the old "examits."

No less remarkable for the lightness of its texture than was the samit on account of the thick substance of its web, and quite as much sought after, was another kind of thin glossy silken stuff "wrought in the orient," and here called first by the Persian name which came with it, *ciclatoun*, that is, bright and shining; but afterwards *sicklatoun*, *siglaton*, *cyclas*. Sometimes a woof of golden thread lent it still more glitter; and it was used both for ecclesiastical vestments and for secular articles of stately dress. In the inventory of St. Paul's cathedral, 1295, there was a cope made of cloth of gold, called ciclatoun: "capa de panno aureo qui vocatur ciclatoun." Among the booty carried off by the English when they sacked the camp of Saladin,

> King Richard took the pavillouns
> Of sendal, and of cyclatoun.

In his 'Rime of Sire Thopas,' Chaucer says

> Of Brugges were his hosen broun
> His robe was of ciclatoun.

Though so light and thin, this cloak of "ciclatoun" was often embroidered in silk and had golden ornaments sewn on it; we read in the 'Metrical romances' of a maiden who sat

> In a robe ryght ryall bowne
> Of a red syclatowne
> Be hur fader syde;
> A coronell on hur hedd set,
> Hur clothys with bestes and byrdes wer bete
> All abowte for pryde.

Knights in the field wore over their armour a long sleeveless gown slit up almost to the waist on both sides; sometimes of "samit," often of "cendal," oftener still of "ciclatourn:" and the name of the gown itself, shortened from the material, became known as "cyclas." Matthew of Westminster records that when Edward the first knighted his son in Westminster abbey he sent to three hundred sons of the nobility, whom the prince was afterward to dub knights in the same church, a most splendid gift of attire, fitting for the ceremony; among which were clycases woven with gold. That these garments were very light and thin we gather from the quiet wit of John of Salisbury, who jeers a man affecting to perspire in the depth of winter, though clad in nothing but his fine cyclas.

Not so costly was a silken stuff known as *cendal, cendallus, sandal, sandalin, cendatus, syndon, syndonus,* as the way of writing the word altered as time went on. When Sir Guy of Warwick was knighted,

> And with him twenty good gomes
> Knightes' and barons' sons,
> Of cloth of Tars and rich cendale
> Was the dobbing in each deal.

The Roll of Caerlaverock tells us that among the grand array which joined Edward the first at Carlisle in 1300, there was to be seen many a rich caparison embroidered upon cendal and samit:

> La ot meint riche guarnement
> Brodé sur sendaus e samis:

and Lacy, earl of Lincoln, leading the first squadron, hoisted his banner made of yellow cendal blazoned with a lion rampant purpre

> Baner out de un cendal safrin,
> O un lioun rampant purprin.

When Sir Bevis of Southampton wished to keep himself unknown at a tournament, we thus read of him:

Sir Bevis disguised all his weed
Of black cendal and of rede,
Flourished with roses of silver bright, etc.

Of the ten silken albs which Hugh Pudsey left to Durham, two were made of samit and two of cendal, or as the bishop calls it, *sandal*. Exeter cathedral had a red cope with a green lining of sandal and a cape of sandaline: "Una capa de sandalin." Piers Ploughman speaks thus to the women of his day:

And ye lovely ladies
With youre long fyngres,
That ye have silk and sandal
To sowe, whan tyme is.
Chesibles for chapeleyns,
Chirches to honoure, etc.

A stronger kind of cendal was wrought and called, in the Latin inventories of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, "cendatus afforciatus:" there was a cope of this material at St. Paul's, and another cope of cloth of gold was lined with it.

Syndonus or *Sindonis*, as it would seem, was a bettermost sort of cendal. St. Paul's had a chasuble as well as a cope of this fabric.

Taffeta, if not a thinner, was a less costly silken stuff than cendal; which word, to this day, is used in the Spanish language, and is defined to be a thin transparent textile of silk or linen: "Tela de seda ó lino muy delgada y trasparente." Taffeta and cendal were used for linings in mediæval England. Chaucer says of his "doctour of phisike,"

In sanguin and in perse he clad was alle
Lined with taffeta and with sendalle.

Sarcenet during the fifteenth century took by degrees the place of cendal, at least here in England.

By some improvement in their weaving of cendal, the Saracens in the south of Spain earned for this light web a good name in

our markets, and it became much sought for here. Among other places, York cathedral had several sets of curtains for its high altar, "de sarcynet." At first this stuff was called from its makers "saracenicum." But, in Anglicising, the name was shortened into "sarcenet;" a word which we use now for the thin silk which of old was known among us as "cendal."

Satin, though far from being so common as other silken textures, was not unknown to England in the middle ages; and Chaucer speaks of it in his 'Man of lawes tale:'

> In Surrie whilom dwelt a compagnie
> Of chapmen rich, and therto sad and trewe,
> That wide were senten hir spicerie,
> Clothes of gold, and satins rich of hewe.

When satin first appeared in trade it was called round the shores of the Mediterranean "aceytuni." The term slipped through early Italian lips into "zetani;" coming westward this name, in its turn, dropped its "i," and smoothed itself into "satin." So, also, it is called in France; while in Italy it now goes by the name of "raso," and the Spaniards keep up its first designation.

In the earlier inventories of church vestments no mention can be found of satin; but this fine silk is spoken of among the various rich bequests made to his cathedral at Exeter by bishop Grandison, about 1340; though later, and especially in the royal wardrobe accompts, it is very commonly specified. Hence we may fairly assume that till the fourteenth century satin was unknown in England; afterwards it met with much favour. Flags were made of it. On board the stately ship in which Beauchamp earl of Warwick, in the reign of Henry the sixth, sailed from England to France, there were flying "three penons of satten," besides "sixteen standards of worsted entailed with a bear and a chain," and a great streamer of forty yards in length and eight yards in breadth, with a great bear and griffin holding a ragged staff poudred full of ragged staffs. Like other silken textiles, satin seems to have been in some instances interwoven with flat gold thread: for

example, Lincoln had of the gift of one of its bishops eighteen copes of red tinsel sattin with orphreys of gold.

Though not often, yet sometimes we read of a silken stuff called *cadas*, *carda*, *carduus*, and used for inferior purposes. The outside silk on the cocoon is of a poor quality compared with the inner filaments, from which it is kept apart in reeling, and set aside for other uses. We find mention of such cloths as belonging to the cathedrals of Exeter and St. Paul's in the thirteenth century. More frequently, instead of being spun, it served as wadding in dress: on the barons at the siege of Caerlaverock might be seen many a rich gambeson garnished with silk, cadas, and cotton:

> Meint riche gamboison guarni
> De soi, de cadas e coton.

The quantity of card purchased for the royal wardrobe, in the year 1299, is set forth in the Liber quotidianus.

Camoca, *camoka*, *camak*, as the name is differently written, was a textile of which in England we hear nothing before the latter end of the fourteenth century. No sooner did it make its appearance than this camoca rose into great repute; the Church used it for her vestments, and royalty employed it for dress as well as in adorning palaces, especially in draping beds of state. In the year 1385, besides some smaller articles, the royal chapel in Windsor castle had a whole set of vestments and other ornaments for the altar, of white camoca; and our princes must have arrayed themselves, on grand occasions, in the same material; for Herod, in one of the Coventry mysteries—the adoration of the Magi—is made to boast of himself: "In kyrtyl of cammaka kynge am I cladde." But it was in draping its state-beds that our ancient royalty showed its affection for camoca. Edward the Black Prince bequeaths to his confessor "a large bed of red camoca with our arms embroidered at each corner," and the prince's mother leaves to another of her sons "a bed of red camak." Edward lord Despencer, in 1375, wills to his wife "my great

bed of blue camaka, with griffins, also another bed of camaka, striped with white and black." What may have been the real texture of this stuff, thought so magnificent, we do not positively know, but it was probably woven of fine camels' hair and silk, and of Asiatic workmanship.

From this mixed web we pass to another more precious, the *Cloth of Tars;* which we presume to have been the forerunner of the now celebrated cashmere, and together with silk made of the downy wool of goats reared in several parts of Asia, but especially in Tibet.

Velvet is a silken textile, the history of which has still to be written. Of the country whence it first came, or the people who were the earliest to hit upon the happy way of weaving it, we know nothing. A very old piece was in the beautiful crimson cope embroidered by English hands in the fourteenth century, now kept at the college of Mount St. Mary, Chesterfield.

We are probably indebted to central Asia, or perhaps China, for velvet as well as satin; and among the earliest places in Europe where it was manufactured, were perhaps first the south of Spain, and then Lucca.

In the earliest of the inventories which we have of church vestments, that of Exeter cathedral, 1277, velvet is not spoken of; but in St. Paul's, London, A.D. 1295, there is some notice of velvet with its kindred web "fustian," for chasubles. Velvet is for the first time mentioned at Exeter in 1327, but as in two pieces not made up, of which some yards had been then sold for vestment-making. From the middle of the fourteenth century velvet is of common occurrence.

The name itself of velvet, "velluto," seems to point out Italy as the market through which we got it from the east, for the word in Italian indicates something which is hairy or shaggy, like an animal's skin.

Fustian was known at the end of the thirteenth century. St. Paul's cathedral at that date had "a white chasuble of fustian."

In an English sermon preached at the beginning of the same century great blame is found with the priest who had his chasuble made of middling fustian: "Þe meshakele of medeme fustian." As then wove, fustian had a short nap on it, and one of the domestic uses to which during the middle ages it had been put was for bed clothes, as thick undersheets. Lady Bargavenny bequeaths, in 1434, "A bed of gold of swans, two pair sheets of raynes (fine linen, made at Rheims), a pair of fustians, six pair of other sheets, etc." It is not unlikely that this stuff may have hinted to the Italians the way of weaving silk in the same manner, and so of producing velvet. Other nations took up the manufacture, and the weaving of velvet was wonderfully improved. It became diapered and, upon a ground of silk or of gold, the pattern came out in a bold manner, with a raised pile. At last, the most beautiful of all manners of diapering, namely, making the pattern to show itself in a double pile, one pile higher than the other and of the same tint, now, as formerly, known as velvet upon velvet, was brought to its highest perfection; and velvets in this fine style were wrought in greatest excellence in Italy, in Spain and in Flanders. Our old inventories often specify these differences in the making of the web. York cathedral had "four copes of crimson velvet plaine, with orphreys of clothe of goulde, for standers;" "a greene cushion of raised velvet;" and "a cope of purshed velvet (redd):" "purshed" means that the velvet was raised in a network pattern.

Diaper was a silken fabric, held everywhere in high estimation during many hundred years, both abroad and in England. We know this from documents beginning with the eleventh century: but the origin of the name is uncertain. Possibly, in order to indicate a one-coloured yet patterned silk, which diaper is, the Byzantine Greeks of the early middle ages invented the term διασπρὸν, diaspron, from διασπάω, I separate, to signify "what distinguishes or separates itself from things about it," as every pattern does on a one-coloured silk. With this textile the Latins

took the name for it from the Greeks and called it "diasper," which in English has been moulded into "diaper." In the year 1066 the empress Agnes gave to Monte Cassino a diaper-chasuble of cloth of gold, "planetam diasperam." This early mention of the name seems to be a conclusive argument against those writers who derive it from Yprès, in Flanders; a town celebrated for linen manufactures at a somewhat later period: yet even then, according to Chaucer, rivalled by workwomen in England. He tells us of the "good wif of Bathe" that

> Of cloth-making she hadde swiche an haunt
> She passed hem of Ipres and of Gaunt.

In the South Kensington collection, no. 1270 shows how these cloths were wrought; and it would seem that cloth of gold was often diapered with a pattern, at least in the time of Chaucer, who describes it on the housing of a king's horse:

> —— trapped in stele,
> Covered with cloth of gold diapred wele.

Church inventories make frequent mention of such diapered silks for vestments. Exeter cathedral had a cope of white diaper with half moons, the gift of bishop Bartholomew, in 1161. Sometimes the pattern of the diapering is noticed; for instance, at St. Paul's, "a chasuble of white diaper, with coupled parrots in places, among branches." Probably the most elaborate specimen of diaper-weaving on record is that which Edmund, earl of Cornwall, gave to the same cathedral; "a cope of a certain diaper of Antioch colour covered with trees and diapered birds, of which the heads, breasts and feet, as well as the flowers on the tress, were woven in gold thread."

By degrees the word "diaper" became widened in its meaning. Not only all sorts of textile, whether of silk, of linen, or of worsted, but the walls of a room were said to be diapered when the self-same ornament was repeated and sprinkled well over it

Thus, in 'the squire of low degree,' the king of Hungary promises his daughter a chair or carriage, that

> Shal be coverd wyth velvette reede
> And clothes of fyne golde al about your heede,
> With damaske whyte and azure blewe
> Well dyaperd with lylles newe.

The bow for arrows held by Sweet-looking is, in Chaucer's 'Romaunt of the rose,' described as

> painted well, and thwitten
> And over all diapred and written, etc.

So now, we call our fine table linen "diaper" because it is figured with flowers and fruits. Sometimes silks diapered were called "fygury:" as the cope mentioned in the York fabric rolls, "una capa de sateyn fygury."



Ladies spinning and weaving; from a manuscript of the fifteenth century.

CHAPTER V.

THERE are some very ancient names, distinguishing different textiles, which require notice: such as "chrysoclavus," "stauraccin," "polystaurium," "gammadion" or "gammadiæ," "de quadruplo," "de octoplo," and "de fundato." Textiles of silk and gold are, over and over again, enumerated as then commonly known under such names, in the 'Liber pontificalis seu de gestis Romanorum pontificum:' a book of great value for every student of early Christian art-work, and in particular of textiles and embroidery.

The *Chrysoclavus*, or golden nail-head, was a remnant which lingered a long time among the ornaments embroidered on ecclesiastical vestments and robes for royal wear of that once so coveted "latus clavus," or broad nail-head-like purple round patch worn upon the outward garment of the old Roman dignitaries. In the court of Byzantium this mark of dignity was elevated, from being purple on white, into gold upon purple. Hence it came that all rich purple silks, woven or embroidered with the "clavus" in gold, were known from their pattern as gold nail-headed, or chrysoclavus; and silken textiles of Tyrian dye, sprinkled all over with large round spots, were once in great demand. Pope Leo in 795, among his several other gifts to the churches at Rome, bestowed a great number of altar frontals made of this purple and gold fabric, as we are told by Anastasius

in the Liber pontificalis. Sometimes these "clavi" were made so large that upon their golden ground an event in the life of a saint or the saint's head was embroidered, and then the whole piece was called "sigillata," or *sealed.*

Stauracin or "stauracinus," taking its name from σταυρὸς the Greek for "cross," was a silken stuff figured with small plain crosses, and therefore from their number sometimes further distinguished by the word signifying that meaning in Greek, *Polystauron.*

The crosses woven on the various fabrics were sometimes of the simplest shape; oftener they were designed after an elaborate type with a symbolic meaning about it that afforded an especial name to the stuffs upon which they were figured.

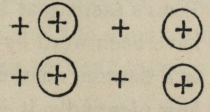
This name *Gammadion*, or *Gammadiæ*, was a word applied as often to the pattern upon silks as to the figures wrought upon gold and silver.

In the Greek alphabet the capital letter gamma takes the shape of an exact right angle thus, Γ. Being so, many writers have seen in it an emblem of our Lord as our corner-stone. Following this idea artists at a very early period struck out a way of forming the cross after several shapes by various combinations with it of this letter Γ. Four of these gammas put so  fall into the shape of the so-called Greek cross; and in this form it was woven upon the textiles denominated *stauracinæ;* or patterned with a cross. Being one of the four same-shaped elements of the cross's figure, the part was significant of the whole: and as an emblem of the corner-stone, our Lord, the gamma or Γ, was frequently shown at one edge of the tunic worn by the apostles in ancient mosaics; wherein sometimes we find, in place of the single gamma, the figure H; another combination of the four gammas in the cross. Whatsoever, therefore, whether of metal or of silk, was found to be marked in this or any other way of

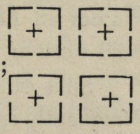
putting the gammas together, or with only a single one, was called "gammadion," or "gammadiæ."

Ancient ingenuity for throwing its favourite gamma into other combinations, and thus bringing out pretty and graceful patterns to be wrought on all sorts of work for ecclesiastical use, did not stop here. In the Liber pontificalis of Anastasius we meet not unfrequently with accounts of vestments, etc. "de stauracin seu quadrapolis"; or "de quadrapolo"; or "de octapolo." The author here evidently means to imply a distinction between a something amounting to four, and to eight, in or upon these textiles. It cannot be to say that one fabric was woven with four, the other with eight threads; had that been so meant, the fact would probably then have been explained by a word constructed like "examitus," p. 24. As the contrast is not in the texture it must be in the pattern of the stuffs; that is, in the number of the crosses: and we further see why "stauracin" and "de quadrapolis" are interchangeable terms.

At the end of Du Cange's glossary is an engraving of a work of Greek art; plate IX. Here St. John Chrysostom stands between St. Nicholas and St. Basil. All three are arrayed in their liturgical garments, which being figured with crosses are of the textile called of old "stauracin;" but there is a marked difference in the way in which the crosses are inserted. The crosses are arranged upon the vestment of St. John thus;



St. Nicholas and St. Basil have chasubles which are not only worked all over with crosses made with gammas, but are surrounded with other gammas joined so as to edge in the crosses, thus;



As four gammas only are necessary to form all the crosses

upon St. John's vestment, we there see the textile called "stauracin de quadruplo," or the stuff figured with a cross of four (gammas); while as eight of these letters are required for the pattern on the others, we have in them an example of the "stauracin de octapolo," or "octapulo," a fabric with a pattern composed of eight gammas.

A far more ancient and universal shape fashioned out of the repetition of the same letter Γ, is that known as *Gammadion;* or, as commonly called at one time in England, the *Filfot.* Several pieces in the South Kensington collection exhibit on them some modification of it: for example, nos. 1261, 1325, 7052, 829A, 8305, 8635, and 8652. Its figure is made out of the usual four gammas, so that they should fall together thus  .

Of silks patterned with the plain Greek cross or "stauracin" there are also several examples in the same collection; and though not of the remotest period are interesting. No. 8234, perhaps wrought in Sicily by the Greeks brought as prisoners from the Morea in the twelfth century, is not without some value. In the chapter library at Durham may be seen (as we learn from Mr. Raine) an example of Byzantine stauracin "colours purple and crimson; the only prominent ornament a cross—often repeated, even upon the small portion which remains." Those who have seen in St. Peter's sacristy at Rome that beautiful light-blue dalmatic said to have been worn by Charlemagne when he sang the gospel, vested as a deacon, on the day he was crowned emperor, will remember how plentifully it is sprinkled with crosses between its exquisite embroideries, so as to make the vestment a real "stauracin." It has been well given by Sulpiz Boisserée in his 'Kaiser dalmatika in der St. Peterskirche;' but far better by Dr. Bock in his splendid work on the coronation robes of the German emperors.

Silks called *de fundato*, from the pattern woven on them, are frequently spoken of by Anastasius. From the text of that writer, and from passages in other authors of his time, it would seem

that the silks themselves were dyed of the richest purple and figured with gold in the pattern of netting. As one of the meanings for the word "funda" is a fisherman's net, rich textiles so figured in gold were denominated "de fundato" or netted. We gather also from Fortunatus that the costly purple-dyed silks called "blatta" were always interwoven with gold. This net-pattern lingered long and, no doubt, we find it under a new name "laqueatus"—meshed—upon a cope belonging to the church of St. Paul's, London, 1295: where an inventory, printed by Dugdale, includes a cope of baudekin with fir-cones "in campis laqueatis" Modifications of this very old pattern may be seen at South Kensington, nos. 1264, 1266, and 8234. In the diapered pattern on some of the cloth of gold found lately in the grave of an archbishop, buried at York about the end of the thirteenth century, the same netting is discernible.

Stragulatæ, striped or barred silks, were at one time in much request. Frequent mention is made of them in the Exeter inventories; for example, in 1277, there were two palls of baudekin, one "stragulata." The illuminations in the manuscript in the Harley collection at the British museum of the deposition of Richard the second affords us instances of this textile. The young man to the right sitting on the ground at the archbishop's sermon is entirely, hood and all, arrayed in this striped silk; and at the altar, where Northumberland is swearing on the eucharist, the priest who is saying mass wears a chasuble of the same stuff. Old St. Paul's had an offertory-veil of the same pattern; "stragulatum" with the stripes red and green.

At the end of the twelfth century there was brought to England, from Greece, a sort of precious silk named there *Imperial.*

Ralph, dean of St Paul's cathedral, tells us that William de Magna Villa, on coming home from his pilgrimage to the holy land about 1178, made presents to several churches of cloths which at Constantinople were called "Imperial." We are told by Roger Wendover, and after him by Matthew Paris, that the

apparition of king John was dressed in royal robes made of the stuff they call imperial. In the inventory of St. Paul's, drawn up in 1295, four tunicles (vestments for subdeacons and lower ministers at the altar) are mentioned as made of this imperial. No colour is specified, except in the one instance of the silk being marbled ; and the patterns are noticed as of red and green, with lions woven in gold. It seems not to have been thought good enough for the more important vestments, such as chasubles and copes. Probably the name was not derived from its colour (supposed royal purple) nor its costliness, but for quite another reason : woven at a workshop kept up by the Byzantine emperors, like the Gobelins is to-day in Paris, and bearing about it some small though noticeable mark, it took the designation of "Imperial." We know it was partly wrought with gold ; but that its tint was always some shade of the imperial purple is a gratuitous assumption. In France this textile was in use as late as the second half of the fifteenth century, but looked upon as old. At York somewhat later, in the early part of the sixteenth, one of its deans bestowed on that cathedral "two (blue) copes of clothe imperialle."

Baudekin was a costly stuff much employed and often spoken of in our literature during many years of the mediæval period.

Ciclatoun, as we have already remarked, was the usual term during centuries throughout western Europe by which the showy golden textiles were called. When, however, Bagdad or Baldak held for no short length of time the lead all over Asia in weaving fine silks, and in especial golden stuffs shot as now in different colours, tinted cloths of gold became known, and more particularly among the English, as "baldakin," "baudekin," or "baudkyn," or silks from Baldak. At last the earlier term "ciclatoun" dropped out of use. Remembering this the reader will more readily understand several otherwise puzzling passages in our old writers, as well as in the inventories of royal furniture and church vestments.

Kings and the nobility affected much this rich stuff for the garments worn on high occasions. When Henry the third knighted William of Valence, in 1247, he had on a robe of cloth of gold made of baudekin; "facta de pretiosissimo baldekino." In the year 1259 the master of Sherborn hospital in the north bequeathed to that house a cope made of the like stuff: "de panno ad aurum scilicet baudekin." Vestments of this material are frequently mentioned in the old church inventories.

These Bagdad or Baldak silks, with a weft of gold, known among us as "baudekins" were often woven very large in size, and applied here in England to especial ritual purposes. As a thanks-offering after a safe return home from a journey they were brought and given to the altar; at the solemn burial of our kings and queens and other great people, the mourners, when offertory time came, went to the hearse and threw a baudekin of costly texture over the coffin. We may learn the ceremonial from the descriptions of many of our mediæval funerals. At the obsequies of Henry the seventh in Westminster abbey:—"Twoe herauds came to the duke of Buck. and to the earles, and conveyed them into the revestrie where they did receive certen palles which everie of them did bringe solemly betwene theire hands and comminge in order one before another as they were in degree unto the said herse, thay kissed theire said palles and delivered them unto the said heraudes which laide them uppon the kyngs corps, in this manner: the palle which was first offered by the duke of Buck. was laid on length on the said corps, and the residewe were laid acrosse, as thick as they might lie." In the same church at the burial of Anne of Cleves in 1557, a like ceremonial of carrying cloth-of-gold palls to the hearse was followed. So also the religious guilds, or other companies, in the middle ages kept palls to be thrown over the bodies of all brothers or sisters at their burial, however lowly may have been their rank.

The word "baudekin" itself became at last enlarged in its meaning. So warm, so mellow, so fast were the tones of crimson

which the dyers of Bagdad knew how to give their silks that, without a thread of gold in them, the mere glowing tints of the plain crimson silken webs won for themselves the name of baudekins. Furthermore, when they quite ceased to be partly woven in gold and from their consequent lower price and cheapness came into use for cloths of estate over royal thrones, the canopy hung over the high altar of a church acquired and yet keeps the appellation (at least in Italy) of "baldachino."

How very full in size, how costly in materials and embroidery, must have sometimes been the cloth of estate spread overhead and behind the throne of our kings, may be gathered from the privy purse expenses of Henry the seventh; wherein this item occurs: "To Antony Corsse for a cloth of an estate conteyning 47½ yerds, £11 the yerd, £522 10*s*." Canopies of this kind are still occasionally to be seen in the throne-room of some of the Roman palaces, whose owners have the old feudal right to the cloth of estate.

The custom itself is thus noticed by Chaucer:

> Yet nere and nere forth in I gan me dress
> Into an hall of noble apparaile,
> With arras spred, and cloth of gold I gesse,
> And other silke of easier availe:
> Under the cloth of their estate sauns faile
> The king and quene there sat as I beheld.

This same rich golden stuff had a third and even better known name, to be found all through our early literature as *Cloth of Pall*.

The state cloak (in Latin pallium, in Anglo-saxon paell), worn alike by men as well as women, was always made of the most gorgeous stuff that could be found. From a very early period in the mediæval ages golden webs shot in silk with one or other of the various colours, occasionally blue but oftener crimson, were sought for through so many years, and everywhere, that at last each sort of cloth of gold had given to it the name of

"pall," no matter the immediate purpose to which it might have to be applied or after what fashion. Vestments for sacred use and garments for knights and ladies were equally made of it. The word is common enough in the church inventories.

As to worldly use, the king's daughter in the 'Squire of low degree' had

> Mantell of ryche degre
> Purple palle and armyne fre:

and in the poem of Sir Isumbras—

> The rich queen in hall was set;
> Knights her served, at hand and feet
> In rich robes of pall.

For ceremonial receptions our kings used to order that every house should be "curtained" along the streets which the procession would have to take through London, "incortinaretur." How this was done we learn from Chaucer in the 'Knight's tale';

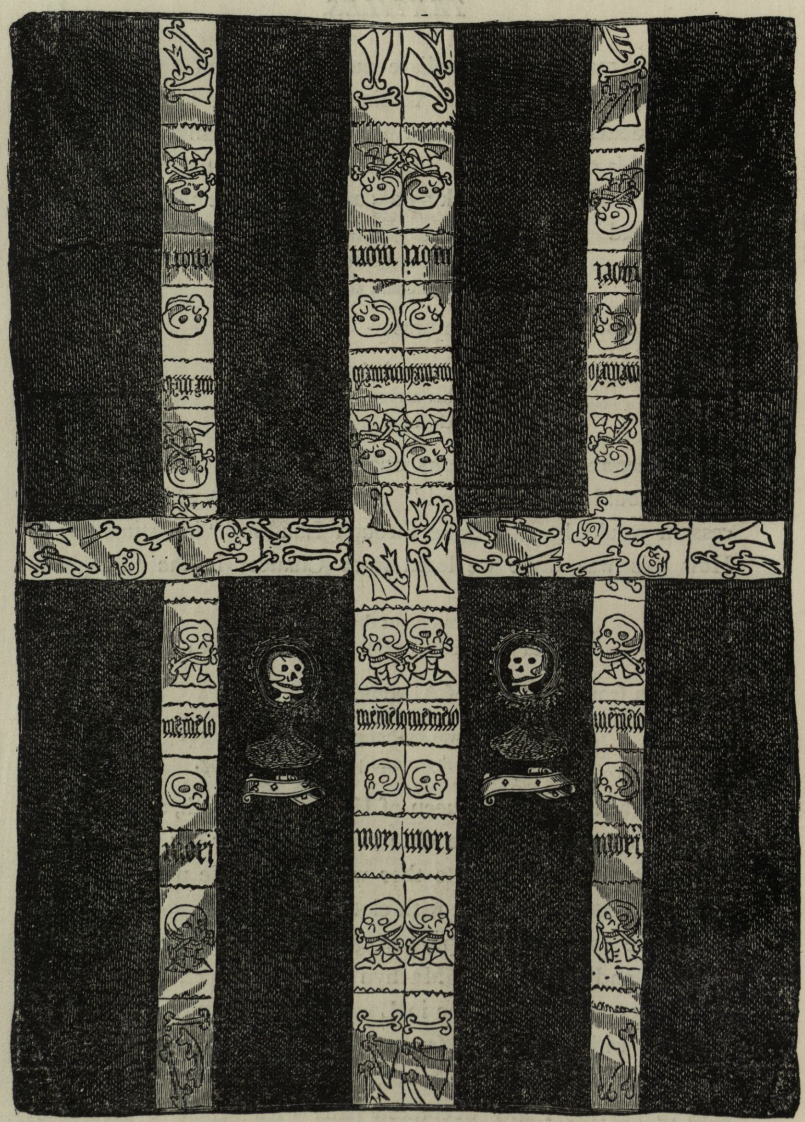
> By ordinance, thurghout the cite large
> Hanged with cloth of gold, and not with sarge;

as well as from the 'Life of Alexander:'

> Al theo city was by-hong
> Of riche baudekyns and pellis (palls) among.

Hence, when Elizabeth, queen of Henry the seventh, "proceeded from the towre throwge the citie of London (for her coronation) to Westminster, al the strets ther wich she shulde passe by, were clenly dressed and besene with clothes of tappestreye and arras. And some strets, as Cheepe, hangged with rich clothes of gold, velvetts, and silks, etc." Machyn in his diary tells us that as late as 1555 "Bow chyrche in London was hangyd with cloth of gold and with ryche hares (arras)."

Both in England and abroad, it was customary in the middle ages to provide richly decorated palls with which to cover the biers of dead people: more especially the members of various guilds. Some of these are still existing; one, belonging to the



Mortuary Cloth from the church of Folleville (Somme), now in the museum at Amiens.

London fishmongers' company; another, of the fifteenth century, is in the museum at Amiens.

A celebrated Mohammedan writer, Ebn-Khaldoun, who died about the middle of the fifteenth century, while speaking of that spot in an Arab palace, the "Tiraz," so designated from the name itself of the rich silken stuffs therein woven, tells us that one of the privileges of the Saracenic kings was to have the name of the prince himself, or the special ensign chosen by his house, woven into the stuffs intended for his personal wear, whether wrought of silk, brocade, or even coarser kind of silk. While gearing his loom the workman contrived that the letters of the title should come out either in threads of gold, or in silk of another colour from that of the ground. The royal apparel thus bore about it its own especial marks, and distinguished not only the sovereign but those personages around him who were allowed by their official rank in his court to wear it; or those again upon whom he had bestowed rich garments as especial tokens of the imperial favour, like the modern pelisse of honour. Before the time of Mahomet the eastern princes used to have woven upon the stuffs wrought for their personal use, or as gifts to others, their own especial likeness, or at times the peculiar ensign of their royalty. But afterwards the custom was changed and names were substituted, to which words were added foreboding good or certain formulas of praise. Wherever the Moslem ruled the practice was introduced; and thus, whether in Asia, in Egypt, or other parts of Africa, or in Moorish Spain, the silken garments for royalty and its favourites showed woven in them the prince's name, or his chosen text. The robes wrought in Egypt for the far-famed Saladin, and worn by him as caliph, bore very conspicuously upon them the name of that conqueror.

In the old lists of church ornaments frequent mention is found of vestments inscribed with words in real or pretended Arabic; and when St. Paul's inventory more than once speaks

of silken stuffs "de opere Saraceno" it is not improbable that some at least of those textiles were so called from having Arabic characters woven on them. Such, too, were the letters on the red pall figured with elephants and a bird, belonging in the fourteenth century to the cathedral at Exeter. Somewhat later, our trade with the south of Spain led us to call such words on woven stuffs Moorish: thus, Joane lady Bergavenny bequeaths (1434) a "hullyng (hangings for a hall) of black red and green. with morys letters, etc."



Silk damask (Sicilian) with imitated Arabic letters.

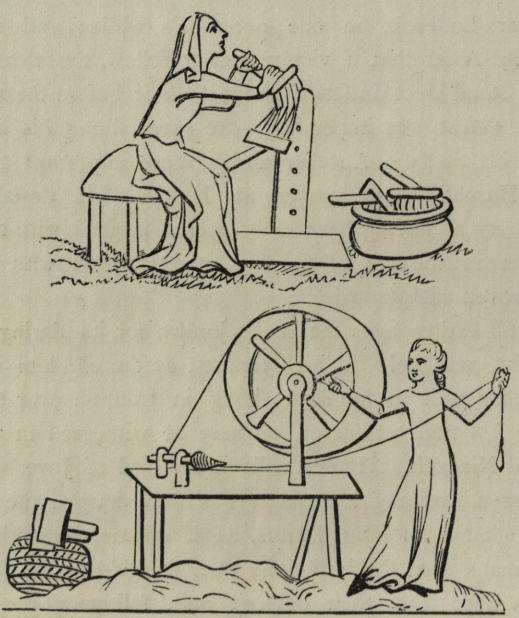
The weaving of letters in textiles is neither a Moorish nor Saracenic invention; ages before, the ancient Parthians used to do so, as we learn from Pliny: "Parthi literas vestibus intexunt." A curious illustration of the frequent use of silken stuffs bearing letters, borrowed from some real or supposed oriental alphabet, is the custom which many of the illuminators had of figuring on frontals and altar canopies, evidently intended to represent silk, meaningless words; and the artists of Italy up to the middle of the sixteenth century did the same on the hems of the garments worn by great personages, in their paintings.

The eagle, single and double-headed, may frequently be found in the patterns of old silks. In all ages certain birds of prey have been looked upon by heathens as ominous for good or evil. Upon the standard which was carried at the head of the Danish invaders of Northumbria was figured the raven, the bird of Odin. This banner had been worked by the daughters of Regnar Lodbrok, in one noontide's while; and it is recorded by Asser that if victory was to follow, the raven would seem to stand erect and as if about to soar before the warriors; but if a defeat was impending, the raven hung his head and drooped his wings. Another and a more important flag, that which Harold fought under at Hastings, is described by Malmesbury as having been embroidered in gold with the figure of a man in the act of fighting, and studded with precious stones, woven sumptuously.

In still earlier ages the eagle, known for its daring and its lofty flight, was held in high repute; as the emblem of power and victory it is to be seen flying in triumph over the head of some Assyrian conqueror, as may be witnessed in Layard's work on Nineveh. Homer calls it the bird of Jove. Quintus Curtius says that a golden eagle was carved upon the yoke of the war chariot of king Darius, as if outstretching his wings. The Romans bore the bird upon their standards; the Byzantine emperors kept it as their device; and, following the ancient

traditions of the east and heedless of their law that forbids the making of images, the Saracens, especially when they ruled in Egypt, had the eagle figured on several things about them, sometimes single at others double-headed, which latter was the shape adopted by the emperors of Germany as their blazon; in which form it is borne to this day by several reigning houses. It is not strange, therefore, that eagles of both fashions are so often to be observed woven upon ancient and eastern textiles.

As early as 1277 Exeter cathedral reckoned among her vestments several so decorated; for instance, a cope of baudekin figured with small two-headed eagles: and Richard king of Germany, brother of Henry the third of England, gave to the same church a cope of black baudekin with eagles in gold figured on it. These are recorded in the inventories printed by Dr. Oliver; and many like instances might be noticed in other lists.



Ladies carding and spinning; from MSS. of the fourteenth century, in the British museum.

CHAPTER VI.

HITHERTO no attempt has been made to distribute ol len silken textiles into various schools; but the numerous specimens in the admirable collection at South Kensington enable us to separate them into several groups—Chinese, Persian, Byzantine, Indian, Syrian, Saracenic, Moresco-Spanish, Sicilian, Italian, Flemish, British, and French. We shall now especially refer to that collection.

The Chinese examples are not many: but, whether plain or figured, they are beautiful in their own way. From all that we know of the people, we are led to believe that their style two thousand years ago is the same still; so that the web wrought by them this year or three hundred years ago, like no. 1368, would differ hardly in a line from their far earlier textiles; of which Dionysius Periegetes wrote that "the Seres make precious figured garments, resembling in colour the flowers of the field, and rivalling in fineness the work of spiders." In these stuffs, warp and woof are of silk and both of the best kinds.

Persian textiles, as we see them at South Kensington, must also have been for many centuries very much the same in design and character. Sometimes the design is made up of various kinds of beasts and birds, real or imaginary, with the sporting cheetah spotted among them; and the "homa" or tree of life conspicuously set above all. In such cases we may conclude that the

web was wrought by Persians, and generally the textile will be found in all its parts to be of the richest materials.

No. 8233, may be referred to as an illustration of the Persian type.

A school of design sprung up among the Byzantine Greeks, from the time when in the sixth century they began to weave home-grown silk, which retained not a little of the beauty, breadth, and flowing outline of ancient art. Together with this, a strong feeling of Christianity showed itself as well in many of the subjects which they took out of holy writ as in the smaller elements of ornamentation. Figures, whether of the human form or of beasts, are given in a much larger and bolder size than on any other ancient stuffs. Though there are not many known specimens from the old looms of Constantinople there is one, no. 7036, showing Samson wrestling with a lion, which may serve as a type. In the year 1295 St. Paul's cathedral would seem to have possessed several vestments made of Byzantine silk. A very splendid dalmatic of Byzantine silk, probably of the twelfth century, is preserved in the treasury of St. Peter's at Rome. The colour is dark blue, and the embroidery in gold and colours.

The specimens at South Kensington from the Byzantine and later Greek loom are not to be taken as by any means first-rate examples of its general production. They are poor both in material and, when figured, in design. There are, however, many pieces: nos. 1241, 1246, 1257, 1266, etc.

Indian ancient silks and textiles have their own distinctive marks.

From Marco Polo, who wandered much over the far east some time during the thirteenth century, we learn that the weaving in India was done by women who wrought in silk and gold, after a noble manner, beasts and birds upon their webs:—"Le loro donne lavorano tutte cose a seta e ad oro e a uccelli e a bestie nobilmente e lavorano di cortine ed altre cose molto ricamente."

Several of the South Kensington mediæval specimens from



Bvzantine Dalmatic : preserved at Rome.

Tartary and India show well the truthfulness of the great Venetian traveller, while speaking about the textiles which he saw in those countries. The dark purple piece of silk figured in gold with birds and beasts of the thirteenth century, no. 7086, is good; but better still is the shred of blue damask, no. 7087, with its birds, its animals, and flowers wrought in gold and different coloured silks. India, also, has ever been famous for its cloud like transparent muslins, which since Marco Polo's days have kept that oriental name, through being better woven at Mosul than elsewhere.

The Syrian school is well represented at South Kensington by several fine pieces.

The whole sea-board of that part of Asia-minor, as well as far inland, was inhabited by a mixture of Jews, Christians, and Saracens; and all were workers in silk. The reputation of the neighbouring Persia had of old stood high for the beauty and durability of her silken textiles, which caused them to be sought for by the European traders. Persia's outlet to the west for her goods lay through the great commercial ports on the coast of Syria. Persia was accustomed to set her own peculiar seal upon her figured webs, by mingling in her designs the mystic "homa:" and, naturally, this part of the pattern became in the eyes of Europeans, at first, a sort of assurance that those goods had been made in Persian looms. By one of the tricks of imitation followed in that day, as well as now, the Syrian designers threw the "homa" into their patterns. Borrowed perhaps originally from Hebrew tradition, this symbol of "the tree of life" had in it nothing objectionable either to the Christian, the Jew, or the Moslem: all three, therefore, took it and made it a leading portion of design in the patterns of their silks; and hence it is that we meet with it so often. Though at the beginning, it may be, done with a fraudulent intention of palming on the world Syrian for Persian silks, the Syrians usually put also into their fabrics a something which declared the real workmanship. Mixed with the

"homa," the "cheetah," and other elements of Persian patterns, the discordant two-handled vase or the badly-imitated Arabic sentence betrays the textile to be not Persian but Syrian. No. 8359 exemplifies this. Furthermore, probably in ignorance about Persia's superstitious use of the "homa" in her old religious services, the Christian weavers of Syria put the sign of the cross by the side of the "tree of life:" as we find upon the piece of silk, no. 7094. Another remarkable specimen of the Syrian loom is no. 7034, whereon the Nineveh lions come forth conspicuously. As good examples of well-wrought "diaspron" or diaper, no. 8233 and no. 7052 may be mentioned.

Saracenic weaving, as shown by the design upon the web, is exemplified in several specimens at South Kensington.

However much against what looks like a heedlessness of the teaching of the Koran, it is certain that the Saracens, those of the upper classes in particular, felt no difficulty in wearing robes upon which animals and the likenesses of created things were woven; with the strictest of their princes a double-headed eagle, possibly borrowed from the crusaders, was a royal heraldic device. Stuffs figured with birds and beasts, with trees and flowers, were not the less on that account of Saracenic workmanship, and meant for Moslem wear. What, however, may be chiefly looked for upon Saracenic textures is a pattern consisting of longitudinal stripes of blue, red, green, and other colour; some of them charged with animals, small in form; some written, in large Arabic letters, with a word or sentence.

Moresco-Spanish or Saracenic textiles wrought in Spain, though partaking of the striped pattern and bearing words in real or imitated Arabic, had some distinctions of their own. The designs shown upon these stuffs are almost always drawn out of strap-work, reticulations, or some combination of geometrical lines, amid which are occasionally to be found different forms of conventional flowers. Sometimes, but very rarely, the crescent moon is figured as in the curious piece, no. 8639. The colours of these

silks are usually either a fine crimson or a deep blue with almost always a fine toned yellow as a ground. But one remarkable feature in these Moresco-Spanish textiles is the presence of the ingenious imitation (before spoken of) of gold; for which shreds of gilded parchment cut up into narrow flat strips are substituted and woven with the silk. This, when fresh, must have looked very bright, and have given the web all the appearance of the favourite stuffs called here in England "tissues." The fraud, as already explained, if fraud it were, is not easily discovered without a magnifying glass. A guide may be found in the blackness of the gold. Nos. 7095, 8590, and 8639, are examples of this gilded vellum.

The Sicilian school strongly marked wide differences between itself and all the others which had lived before; and the history of its loom is as interesting as it is varied.

The first to teach the natives of Sicily how to rear the silkworm and spin its silk were, as it would seem, the Mahomedans, who coming over from Africa brought with them, besides the art of weaving silken textiles, a knowledge of the fauna of that vast continent—its giraffes, its antelopes, its gazelles, its lions, its elephants. These invaders told them also of the parrots of India and the hunting sort of leopard,—the cheetahs; and when the stuff was wrought for European wear both beast and bird were imaged upon the web, and at the same time a word in Arabic was woven in. Like all other Saracens, those in Sicily loved to mingle gold in their tissues; and, to spare the silk, cotton thread was not unfrequently worked up in the warp. When, therefore, we meet with beasts taken from the fauna of Africa, such, especially, as the giraffe and the several classes of the antelope family, with perhaps also an Arabic motto, and part of the pattern wrought in gold, as well as cotton in the warp, we may fairly take the specimen as a piece of Sicily's work in its first period of weaving silk.

The second epoch was when in the twelfth century Roger, king of Sicily, took Corinth, Thebes, and Athens; from each of

which cities he led away captives all the men and women he could find who knew how to weave silks, and carried them to Palermo. These Grecian new comers brought fresh designs which were adopted sometimes wholly, at others but in part and mixed up with the older Saracenic style. In this second period of the island's loom we discover what traces the Byzantine school impressed upon Sicilian silks, and helped so much to alter the type of their first designs. On one silk, the pattern is a grotesque mask amid the graceful twinings of luxuriant foliage, such as might have been then found upon many a fragment of old Greek sculpture; this may be seen on no. 8241; on another, a sovereign on horseback wearing the royal crown and carrying a hawk upon his wrist, as in no. 8589; on a third, no. 8234, is the Greek cross, with a pattern much like the old netted or "de fundato" kind which has been described, p. 38.

But Sicily's third is quite her own peculiar style. At the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century she struck into an untried path. Without throwing aside the old elements employed by the Mahomedans Sicily put with them the emblem of Christianity, the cross, in various forms, on some occasions with the letter V. four times repeated.

From the east to the uttermost western borders of the Mediterranean the weavers of every country had been in the habit of figuring upon their silks those beasts and birds they saw around them: the Tartar, the Indian, and the Persian gave us the parrot and the cheetah; the Africans, the giraffe and the gazelle; the people of each continent, the lions, the elephants, the eagles, and the other birds common to both. From the sculpture of the Greeks and Romans the Sicilians could have easily copied the fabled griffin and the centaur; but it was left for their own wild imaginings to figure such an odd compound in one being as the animal—half elephant, half griffin—which we see in no. 1288. Their daring flights of fancy in coupling the difficult with the beautiful are curious; in one piece large eagles are perched in

pairs with a radiating sun between them, and beneath are dogs, in pairs, running with heads turned back; in another, running harts have caught one of their hind legs in a cord tied to their collar, and an eagle swoops down upon them; and the same animal, in another place on the same piece, has switched its tail into the last link of a chain fastened to its neck; on a third sample are harts, the letter M floriated, winged lions, crosses floriated, crosses sprouting out on two sides with *fleurs-de-lis*, and four-legged monsters, some like winged lions, some biting their tails. Hardly elsewhere to be found are certain elements peculiar to the patterns upon silks from mediæval Sicily; such, for instance, as harts, and demi-dogs with very large wings, both animals having remarkably long manes streaming far behind them; or harts lodged under green trees in a park with paling about it. The hawk, the eagle, double and single headed, or the parrot, may be found on stuffs all over the east; not so, however, the swan, which was a favourite with Sicilians and may be seen often drawn with much gracefulness.

The Sicilians showed their strong affection for certain plants and flowers. On a great many of the silks in the South Kensington collection from Palermitan looms we see figured upon a tawny coloured grounding beautifully drawn foliage in green; sometimes vine leaves, sometimes what looks like parsley, so curled, crispy, and serrated are its leaves. Another peculiarity is the introduction of the letter U, repeated so as to mark the feathering upon the tails of birds; or to fall into the shape of an O; as in nos. 8591, 8599.

Whether it was that the crusaders made Sicily so often the halting spot on their way to the holy land, or that knights crowded there for other purposes, and thus dazzled the eyes of the islanders with the bravery of their armorial bearings, it is certain that the Sicilians were particularly given to introduce many heraldic charges—wyverns, eagles, lions rampant, and griffins—into their designs. The occasions in which such elements of



Silk damask—Sicilian : fourteenth-century.

blazoning come in are so numerous that one of the features belonging to the Sicilian loom in its third period is that, bating tinctures, it is decidedly heraldic.

All this beauty and happiness of invention, set forth by bold, free, spirited drawing, were bestowed too often upon stuffs of a very poor inferior quality, in which the gold if not actually base was always scanty, and a good deal of cotton was wrought up with the silk.

Till within a few years past the royal manufactory at Sta. Leucia, near Naples, produced silks of remarkable richness; and the piece, no. 721, does credit to its loom, as it wove in the seventeenth century. Northern Italy was not idle; and the looms which she set up in several of her great cities, in Lucca, Florence, Genoa, Venice, and Milan, earned for themselves a good repute and a wide trade for their gold and silver tissues, their velvets, and their figured silken textiles. Yet, in the same way as each of these free states had its own accent and provincialisms in speech, so also had it a something often thrown into its designs and style of drawing which told of the place and province whence the textiles came.

Lucca at an early period made herself known in Europe for her textiles; but her workmen, like those of Sicily, seem to have thought themselves bound to follow the style brought by the Saracens of figuring parrots and peacocks, gazelles, and even cheetahs, as we see in the specimens no. 8258 and no. 8616. But with these eastern animals she mixed up emblems of her own, such as angels clothed in white. She soon dropped what was oriental from her patterns which she began to draw in a larger, bolder manner, and showing an inclination for light blue as a colour.

As in other places abroad so at Lucca cloths of gold and of silver were often wrought, and the Lucchese cloths of this costly sort were in much request in England during the fourteenth century. In all likelihood they were not of the deadened but the



1269.

SILK AND GOLD DAMASK.

Sicilian, 14th century.

Vincent Brooks Day & Son Lith



sparkling kind, afterwards especially known as "tissue." Exeter cathedral, in 1327, had a cope of silver tissue, or cloth of Lucca:—"de panno de Luk." At a later date, belonging to the same church, were two fine chasubles—one purple, the other red—of the same glittering stuff: "de purpyll panno." York cathedral possessed many copes of tissue shot with every colour required by its ritual, and among them were "a reade cope of clothe of tishewe with orphry of pearl, a cope with orphrey, a cope of raised clothe of goulde," making a distinction between tissue and the ordinary cloth of gold. In the wardrobe accounts of Edward the second the golden tissue, or Lucca cloth, is several times mentioned. Whether the ceremony happened to be sad or gay this glittering web was used; palls made of Lucca cloth were, at masses for the dead, strewed over the corpse; at marriages the care-cloth was made of the same stuff: thus when Richard de Arundell and Isabella, Hugh le Despenser's daughter, had been wedded at the door of the royal chapel, the veil held spread out over their heads as they knelt inside the chancel during the nuptial mass was of Lucca cloth.

About the same time velvet became known, and came into use both for vestments and for personal wear; and Lucca probably was among the first places in Europe to weave it. The specimens at South Kensington of this fine textile from Lucchese looms, though few in comparison with those from Genoa, still have a certain historical value for the English workman: no. 1357, with its olive green plain silken ground and trailed all over with flowers and leaves in a somewhat deeper tone, and the earlier example, no. 8322, with its ovals and feathering stopped with graceful cusps and artichokes, afford us good instances of what Lucca could produce in the way of artistic velvets.

Genoa, though in mediæval times not so conspicuous as she afterwards became for her textile industry, encouraged over her narrow territory the weaving of silken webs. Of these the earliest mention we have found is in the inventory of vestments belonging

to St. Paul's cathedral, London, in 1295: besides a cope of Genoa cloth that church had, of the same manufacture, a hanging patterned with wheels and two-headed birds. Though this first description be scant, we may reasonably gather that the Genoese cloths must have resembled the textiles wrought at Lucca. Genoa still keeps up her old reputation for beautiful velvets.

In the collection at South Kensington there are examples of every kind of Genoese velvets; some with a smooth unbroken surface, some elaborately patterned and showing, together with wonderful skill in the weaving, much beauty of design. Some are raised or cut, the design being worked in a pile standing well up by itself out of a flat ground of silk, either of the same or of another colour, and not unfrequently wrought in gold. No. 7795 is an example of a very costly kind; in which the ground is velvet, and again of velvet is the pattern itself but raised one pile higher than the other, so as to show its form and shape distinctly. No. 8323 shows how the design was worked in various coloured velvet. This last was a favourite in England and called motley; in his will, 1415, printed in Rymer's Fœdera, Henry lord Scrope bequeathed two vestments, one, motley velvet rubeo de auro; the other, motley velvet nigro, rubeo et viridi, etc.

Venice does not seem to have been at any time, like Sicily and Lucca, smitten with the taste of imitating in her looms the patterns which she saw abroad upon textile fabrics, but appears to have borrowed from the orientals only one kind of weaving cloth of gold: the yellow chasuble at Exeter cathedral in 1327, figured with beasts, is the only instance we know where she wove animals upon silks. Venice, however, set up for herself a new branch of textiles, and wrought for church use square webs of a crimson ground on which were figured, in gold or on yellow silk, subjects taken from the Scriptures or the persons of saints and angels. These square pieces were employed, sewed together, as frontals to altars, but when longwise more generally as orphreys to chasubles, copes, and other vestments.



8626

SILK DAMASK,

Italian. 14th century

Vincent Brooks Day & Son, lith.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM LIBRARY

There is a remarkable similarity between the drawing of the figures upon old Venetian silks and the woodcuts in books published at Venice in the early part of the sixteenth century; such as the fine pontifical by Giunta, or the "Rosario" by Varisco. We find in both the same style and manner; the same broad fold and fall of drapery; the same plumpness and outline of the human face and figure. So near is the likeness in design that we may almost believe that the artists who supplied the blocks for the printers sketched also the drawings for the looms.

By the fifteenth century Venice knew how to produce good damasks in silk and gold: if we had nothing more than the specimen, no. 1311, where St. Mary of Egypt is so well represented, it would be quite enough for her to claim for herself such a distinction. Nor can there be much doubt that Venice wrought in velvet; and if those rich stuffs were made there, sometimes raised, sometimes pile upon pile, in which her painters loved to dress the personages, men especially, in their pictures, then Venetian velvets were certainly beautiful. Of this any one may satisfy himself by one visit to our National gallery. There, in the "Adoration of the magi" painted by Paulo Veronese, the second of the wise men is clad in a robe of crimson velvet, cut or raised after a design in keeping with the style of the period.

No insignificant article of Venetian textile workmanship were her laces wrought in every variety; in gold, in silk, in thread. The portrait of a Doge usually shows him clothed in his dress of state. His wide mantle, with large golden buttons, is made of some rich dull silver cloth; and on his head is the Phrygian-shaped ducal cap bound round with broad gold lace diapered, as we see in the bust portrait of Loredano, painted by John Bellini, in the National gallery. Not only was the gold in the thread particularly good but the lace itself in great favour at the English court at one time; bought, not by yard measure but by weight, "a pounde and a half of gold of Venys" was employed "aboute the making of a lace and botons for the king's mantell of the

garter." This was for Henry the seventh. "Frenge of Venys gold" appears twice in the wardrobe accounts of Edward the fourth. Laces in worsted or in linen thread wrought by the bobbin at Venice, but more especially her point laces or such as were done with the needle, always had, as they still have, a great reputation.

Venetian linens, for fine towelling and napery in general, were in favourite use in France during a part of the fifteenth century. In the 'Ducs de Bourgogne' by Laborde, more than once we meet with such an entry as "une pièce de nappes, ouvraige de Venise."

Florence, about the middle of the fourteenth century, obtained



Silk damask—Florentine: fifteenth century.

a place in the foremost rank amid the weavers of northern Italy. Specimens of her earliest handicraft are rare; there are two at South Kensington. One of these, no. 8563, shows the excellence of her work in secular silks. Other pieces witness to the delicacy of her design at a later time, the sixteenth century. The orphrey-webs of Florence are equally conspicuous for drawing and skill in weaving, and in beauty come up to those made at Venice, far surpassing anything of the kind ever wrought at Cologne.

But it was of her velvets that Florence was warrantably proud. Henry the seventh bequeathed "to God and St. Peter, and to the abbot and prior and convent of our monastery of Westminster, the whole suit of vestments made at Florence in Italy." We may yet see how gorgeous this textile was in one of these Westminster abbey copes still in existence, preserved at Stonyhurst college. The golden ground is trailed all over with leaf-bearing boughs of a bold type, in raised or cut ruby-toned velvet of a rich soft pile, which is freckled with gold thread sprouting up like loops. Though not so rich in material nor so splendid in pattern, there are at South Kensington, nos. 7792 and 7799, two specimens of Florentine cut crimson velvet on a golden ground, like the royal vestments in their kind and having the same peculiarity, the little gold thread loop shooting out of the velvet pile. These pieces are a full century later than the cope at Stonyhurst.

That peculiar sort of ornamentation—the little loop of gold thread standing well up and in single spots—upon some velvets, seems at times to have been replaced, perhaps with the needle, by small dots of solid metal, gold or silver gilt, upon the pile: of the gift of one of its bishops, John Grandisson, Exeter cathedral had a crimson velvet cope, the purple velvet orphrey of which was so wrought: "purpyll velvette worked with pynsheds" of pure gold.

Milan, though now-a-days she stands in such high repute for the richness and beauty of her silks of all sorts, was not, we believe, at any period during mediæval times as famous for her velvets, her brocades, or cloths of gold, as for her armour, so strong and trust-

worthy for the field, so exquisitely demascened for courtly service. Still, in the sixteenth century, she earned a name for rich cut velvets as may be seen in the specimen, no. 698; for her silken net-work, no. 8336, which may have led the way to weaving silk stockings; and for her laces of the open tinsel kind once in great vogue for both sacred and secular use, as in no. 8331.

England, from her earliest period, had textile fabrics varying in design and material; the colours in the woollen garments worn by each of the three several classes into which the Bardic order was divided, and of the chequered pattern in Boadicea's cloak, have been already mentioned. It would seem from John Garland, whose witness is referred to above, p. 12, that the lighter and more tasteful webs wrought here came from women's hands; and the loom, one of which must have been in almost every English nunnery and homestead, was of the simplest make.

In ancient times the Egyptians wove in an upright loom, and beginning at top so as to weave downwards sat at their work. In Palestine also the weaver had an upright loom, but, beginning at bottom and working upwards, was obliged to stand. During the mediæval period the loom in England was horizontal, as is shown by that figured in the Bedford book of Hours (preserved in the British museum), fol. 32; at which the blessed Virgin is seated weaving curtains for the temple.

There are several examples at South Kensington of the work of English women, showing the excellence of their handicraft as well as elegance in design during the thirteenth century. Nos. 1233, 1256, and 1270 may be referred to. But for specimens of the commoner sorts of silken textiles and of wider breadth, which began to be woven in this country under Edward the third, it would be hazardous to direct the reader. Recent examples, velvets among the rest, may be found in the Brooke collection. To some students the piece of old English printed chintz, no. 1622, will not be without an interest.

For the finer sort of linen napery Eylisham or Ailesham in

Lincolnshire was famous during the fourteenth century. Exeter cathedral, in 1327, had a hand towel of "Ailesham cloth."

Our coarser native textiles in wool or in thread, or in both woven together, formed a stuff called "burel." St. Paul's in 1295 had a light blue chasuble, and Exeter cathedral in 1277 a long pall of this texture. Burel and, in short, all the coarser kinds of work were wrought by men: sometimes in monasteries. The old Benedictine rule obliged the monks to give a certain number of hours every week-day to hand-work, either at home or in the field.

The weaving in this country of woollen cloth, as a staple branch of trade, is very old. Of the monks at Bath abbey we are told by a late writer, "that the shuttle and the loom employed their attention (about the middle of the fourteenth century), and under their active auspices the weaving of woollen cloth (which made its appearance in England about the year 1330, and received the sanction of an act of parliament in 1337) was introduced, established, and brought to such perfection at Bath as rendered the city one of the most considerable in the west of England for this manufacture." Worcester cloth was so good that, by a chapter of the Benedictine order held in 1422 at Westminster abbey, it was forbidden to be worn by the monks and declared smart enough for military men. Norwich also wove stuffs that were in demand for costly household furniture; and Sir John Cobham, in 1394, bequeathed "a bed of Norwich stuff embroidered with butterflies." In one of the chapels at Durham priory there were four blue cushions of Norwich work. Worsted, a town in Norfolk, by a new method of its own for the carding of the wool with combs of iron well heated, and then twisting the thread harder than usual in the spinning, enabled our weavers to produce a woollen stuff of a peculiar quality, to which the name itself of worsted was immediately given. To such a high repute did the new web grow that church vestments and domestic furniture of the choicest sorts were made out of it. Exeter cathedral among its chasubles had several

"de nigro worsted" in cloth of gold. Vestments made of worsted, variously spelt "worsett" and "woryst," are enumerated in the fabric rolls of York minster. Elizabeth de Bohun, in 1356, bequeathed to her daughter the countess of Arundel "a bed of red worsted embroidered;" and Joane lady Bergavenny leaves to John of Ormond "a bed of cloth of gold with lebardes, with those cushions and tapettes of my best red worsted."

Irish cloth, white and red, in the reign of king John was much used in England; and in the household expenses of Swinford, bishop of Hereford in 1290, an item occurs of Irish cloth for lining.

English weavers knew also how to work artificially designed and well-figured webs. In the wardrobe accounts of Edward the second is this item: "to a mercer of London for a green hanging of wool wove with figures of kings and earls upon it, for the king's service in his hall on solemn feasts at London." Such "salles," as they were called in France, and "hullings" or rather "hallings" the name they went under here, were much valued abroad and in common use at home. Under the head of "Salles d'Angleterre" among the articles of costly furniture belonging to Charles the fifth of France, in 1364, one set of hangings is thus entered: "une salle d'Angleterre vermeille brodée d'azur, et est la bordeure à vignettes et le dedens de lyons, d'aigles et de lyepars." Here in England, Richard earl of Arundel in 1392 willed to his dear wife "the hangings of the hall which was lately made in London, of blue tapestry with red roses with the arms of my sons," etc.; and lady Bergavenny, after bequeathing her hullying of black, red, and green to one friend, left to another her best stained "hall."

Flemish textiles, at least of the less ambitious kinds such as napery and woollens, were much esteemed centuries ago; and our countryman Matthew of Westminster says of Flanders that, made from the material which we sent her, the wool, she sent us back precious garments. So important was the supply of wool to the Flemings in the fourteenth century that the check given to it by

the wars between England and France at that time led to a special treaty between Edward the third and the burghers of the Flemish communes under the guidance of James van Artevelde.

Though industrious everywhere within her limits, some of the towns of Flanders stood foremost for certain kinds of stuff, and Bruges became in the latter end of the fifteenth century conspicuous for its silken textiles. The satins of Bruges were used in England for church garments. Haconbie church, in 1566, had "one white vestmente of bridges satten repte in peces and a clothe made thereof to hange before our pulpitt;" and in 1520 York cathedral had "a vestment of balkyn (baudekin) with a crosse of green satten in bryges." Her damasks silks were equally in demand; and the specimens at South Kensington will interest the student. Nos. 8318 and 8332 show the ability of the Bruges loom; while the favourite pattern with the pomegranate in it betrays the likings of the Spaniards, at that time the rulers of the country, for this token of their renowned Isabella. No. 8319 is another sample of Flemish weaving, rich in its gold and full of beauty in design.

In her velvets Flanders had no need to fear a comparison with anything of the kind that Italy ever threw off from her looms, whether at Venice, Florence, or Genoa. Not to name others one example, with its cloth of gold ground and its pattern in a dark blue deep-piled velvet, is not surpassed in gorgeousness even by that splendid stuff from Florence of which the Stonyhurst cope, just spoken of, was made.

Block-printed linen toward the end of the fourteenth century was another production of Flanders. Though existing examples to the eyes of many may look poor or mean, yet to men like the cotton-printers of Lancashire they will have a strong attraction; and to the scholar they will be deeply interesting as suggestive of the art of printing. Such specimens are rare, but it is likely that England can show in the chapter library at Durham the earliest sample of the kind as yet known; a fine sheet wrapped

about the body of some old bishop found in a grave opened by Mr. Raine in 1827, within the cathedral. Several pieces of ancient silks and English embroidery were found at the same time.

What Bruges was in silks and velvets, Yprès, in the sixteenth century, became for linen; and for many years Flemish linens were in favourite use throughout England. Hardly a church of any size, scarcely a gentleman's house in this country, but used a quantity of towels and other napery that was made in Flanders, especially at Yprès.

French silks, now in such extensive use, were not much cared for until the end of the sixteenth century in France itself, and seldom heard of abroad. The reader, then, must not be astonished at finding so few examples of the French loom in any collection of ancient silken textiles.

In France, as in England, women in mediæval days, old and young, rich and poor, while filling up their leisure hours in-doors used to work on a small loom, weaving narrow webs, often of gold and diapered with coloured silks. At South Kensington, nos. 1250, 7062, and 7064 are examples of such French wrought stuffs belonging to the thirteenth century. In damasks, the earliest French productions are of the sixteenth century; and no. 8352 is a favourable example of what this manufacture then was in France; everything later is of the type so well known to everybody. In several of her textiles a leaning towards classicism in design is discernible.

Like Flanders, France knew how to weave fine linen which here in England was much employed for ecclesiastical as well as household purposes. Three new cloths of Rains (Rennes in Brittany) were, in 1327, in use for the high altar in Exeter cathedral, and many altar cloths of Paris linen. In the poem of the 'Squire of low degree' the lady is told

> Your blankettes shal be of fustyane,
> Your shetes shal be of cloths of rayne;

and, in 1434, lady Bergavenny devises in her will "two pair sheets of Raynes, a pair of fustians," etc.

Cologne, the queen of the Rhine, became famous during the whole of the fifteenth and part of the sixteenth century for a certain kind of ecclesiastical textile which, from the very general use to which it has been applied, we may call "orphrey web." The productions of Cologne, however, are every way far below in beauty the similar works of Italy. Italian orphrey-webs are generally worked in gold or yellow silk upon a crimson ground of silk. Florentine are often distinguished from the Venetian by the introduction of white for the faces; those of Cologne vary from both by introducing blue, while the material is almost always poor and the weaving coarse. In England this orphrey web was in church use and called, as we learn from the York "wills and testaments," "rebayn de Colayn."

The piece of German napery, no. 8317 (of the beginning of the fifteenth century), will be to those curious about household linen an acceptable specimen.

If in some old inventory of church vestments we find an entry mentioning a chasuble made of cloth of Cologne, we should understand it to mean not a certain broad textile woven there, but merely a vestment composed of several pieces of this kind of web sewed together; like the frontal made of pieces of woven Venice orphreys, no. 8976.

CHAPTER VII.

THE countries whence silks came to England are numerous; we find early notices of Antioch, Tarsus, Alexandria, Damascus, Byzantium, Cyprus, Trip or Tripoli, and Bagdad, and later of Venice, Genoa, and Lucca. To fix the localities of others would be but guess work.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century a silk called "*Acca*" is occasionally mentioned: and, from the description, it must have been a cloth of gold shot with coloured silk, figured with animals: William de Clinton, earl of Huntingdon, gave to St. Alban's monastery a whole vestment of cloth of gold shot with sky-blue and called cloth of Acca. It would look as if this stuff took its name from having been brought to us through the port of Acre: and Macri, in his valuable Hierolexicon, says that the name of the ancient Ptolemais in Syria was so written.

What in one age and at a particular place happened to be well made and therefore was eagerly sought for, at a later period and in another place was better wrought and at a lower price. Time, indeed, changed the name of the market, but did not alter in any great degree either the quality of the material or the style of the design wrought upon it. Throughout the kingdom of the Byzantine Greeks the loom had to change its gearing very little. The Saracenic loom, whether in Asia, Africa, or Spain, was always Arabic, though Persia could not forget her old traditions about the "hom" or tree of life, and cheetahs, and birds of

various sorts. With regard to the whole of Asia, its many peoples from the earliest ages knew how not only to weave cloth of gold but to figure it with birds and beasts. In later times, Marco Polo in the thirteenth century found exactly the same kinds of textile known in the days of Darius still everywhere, from the shores of the Mediterranean to the far east. What he says of Bagdad he repeats in fewer words about many other cities. In finding their way to England these fabrics received, if not in all at least in most instances, the names of the seaports in the Mediterranean where they had been shipped.

For beautifully wrought and figured silk, one of the few terms that still outlive the mediæval period is Damask.

China, no doubt, was the first country to ornament its silken webs with a pattern. India, Persia, and Syria, then Byzantine Greece, followed, but at long intervals between, in China's footsteps. Stuffs so figured brought with them to the west the name "diaspron" or diaper, bestowed upon them at Constantinople. But about the twelfth century the city of Damascus, even then long celebrated for its looms, so far outstripped all other places for beauty of design that her silken textiles were in demand everywhere; and thus, as often happens, traders fastened the name of Damascen or Damask upon every silken fabric richly wrought and curiously designed, no matter whether it came or not from Damascus. At last, samit, having long been the epithet betokening all that was rich and good in silk, was forgotten, and diaper, from being the very word significant of pattern, became a secondary term descriptive of merely a part in the elaborate design on damask.

Baudekin, that sort of costly cloth of gold spoken of so much during so many years in English literature, took (as was said before) its famous name from Bagdad. Many specimens of baudekin in the South Kensington collection furnish proofs of the ancient weavers' dexterity in their management of the loom, and especially of the artists' taste in setting out their intricate and

beautiful designs. An identification between very many samples there brought together of ancient textiles in silk and the descriptions of similar stuffs given us in those valuable records, our old church inventories, might be carried on if necessary to a very lengthened extent.

Dorneck was the name given to an inferior kind of damask wrought of silk, wool, linen thread and gold, in Flanders. This was manufactured towards the end of the fifteenth century mostly at Tournay; which city in Flemish was often called Dorneck—a word variously spelt as Darnec, Darnak, Darnick, and sometimes even Darness.

The guild of the blessed Virgin at Boston had a care cloth of "silke dornex" and church furniture. The "care cloth" was a sort of canopy held over the bride and bridegroom as they knelt for the nuptial blessing, according to the Salisbury rite, at the marriage mass. At Exeter dorneck was used in chasubles for orphreys. A specimen of dorneck may be seen, no. 7058. It is several times mentioned in the York fabric rolls.

Buckram, so called from Bokkara where it was originally made, in the middle ages was much esteemed for being costly and very fine; and consequently fit for use in church vestments and for secular personal wear. "Panus Tartaricus" or Tartary cloth is often spoken of. John Grandison, bishop of Exeter in 1327, gave to his cathedral flags of white and red buckram; and among the five very rich veils for covering the moveable lectern in that church three were lined with blue "bokeram." As late as the beginning of the sixteenth century this stuff was held good enough for lining to a black velvet gown for a queen, Elizabeth of York. The coarse thick fabric which now goes by the name is very different from the older production known as "bokeram."

Burdalisaunder, Bordalisaunder, Bourde de Elisandre, with other varieties in spelling, is a term often to be met with in old wills and church inventories. In the year 1327 Exeter had a chasuble of Bourde de Elisandre of divers colours: and from the

Yorkshire wills we find that sometimes it was wide enough for half a piece to form the adornment of a high altar.

"Bord" in Arabic means a striped cloth; and we know, both from travellers and the importation of the textile itself, that many tribes in north and eastern Africa weave stuffs for personal wear of a pattern consisting of white and black longitudinal stripes. St. Augustin, living in north Africa near the modern Algiers, speaks of a stuff for clothing called "burda" in the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century. It is not impossible that the curtains for the tabernacle as well as the girdles for Aaron and his sons, of fine linen and violet and purple and scarlet twice dyed, were wrought with this very pattern, so that in the "burd Alisaunder" we behold the oldest known design for any textile. This stuff in the middle ages was a silken web in different coloured stripes, and specimens also may be found at South Kensington. Though made in many places round the Mediterranean this silk took its name, at least in England, from Alexandria.

Fustian, of which we still have two forms in velveteen and corduroy, was originally wove at Fustat on the Nile, with a warp of linen thread and a woof of thick cotton, so twilled and cut that it showed on one side a thick but low pile; and the web thus managed took its name of Fustian from that Egyptian city. At what period it was invented we do not rightly know, but we are well aware it must have been brought very early to this country; for our countryman St. Stephen Harding, when a Cistercian abbot and an old man about the year 1114, forbade chasubles in his church to be made of anything but fustian or plain linen. The austerity of his rule reached even the ornaments of the church. From such a prohibition we are not to draw as a conclusion that fustian was at the time a mean material; quite the contrary, although not splendid it was a seemly textile. Years afterwards, in the fourteenth century, Chaucer tells us of his knight:—

Of fustian he wered a gepon.

In the fifteenth century Naples had a repute for weaving fustians; and our English churchwardens, not being learned in geography or spelling, made some odd mistakes in their accounts about this as about some other continental stuffs: "Fuschan in appules" for fustian from Naples is droll; yet droller still is "mustyrd devells," for a cloth made in France at a town called Mustrevilliers.

Muslin, as it is now throughout the world so from the earliest antiquity, has been everywhere in Asia in favourite use both as an article of dress and as furniture. Its cloud-like thinness and its lightness were not the only charms belonging to this stuff: it was esteemed equally as much for the taste with which stripes of gold had been woven in its warp. As we learn from the travels of Marco Polo, the further all wayfarers in Asia wandered among eastern nations the higher they found the point of excellence which had been reached in weaving silk and gold into splendid fabrics. The silkworm lived and thrived there and the cotton plant also was in its home, its birth-place, in those regions.

Like many cities of central Asia, Mosul had earned for itself a reputation of old for the beauty of its gold-wrought silken textiles. Cotton grew all around in plenty; the inhabitants, especially the women, were gifted with such quick feeling of finger that they could spin thread from this cotton of more than hair-like fineness. Cotton with them took the place of silk in the loom; and gold was not forgotten in the weaving. Their work, not only because it was so much cheaper but from its own peculiar beauty and comeliness, won for itself a high place in common estimation: and the name of the town where it was wrought in such perfection was given to it as its distinctive name. Hence, whether wove with or without gold, we call this cotton web muslin, from the Asiatic city of Mosul.

Cloth of Areste is another term for woven stuffs, to be found in our old English deeds and inventories. The first time we meet it is in an order given, 1244, by Henry the third for finding

two cloths of Areste with which two copes were to be made for royal chapels. Again it comes a few years later at St. Paul's, which cathedral A.D. 1295 had, besides a dalmatic and tunicle of this silk "white silk of Areste diapered," as many as thirty and more hangings of the same texture.

From the description of these pieces we gather that this so-called cloth of Areste must have been both beautiful and rich, being for the most part cloth of gold figured elaborately; some with lions and double-headed eagles, others, for example, with the death and burial of our Lord.

We are not disposed to agree with the suggestion that this cloth was a kind of arras. Arras had not won for itself a reputation for its tapestry before the fourteenth century. Tapestry itself is too thick and heavy for use in vestments; yet this cloth of Areste was light enough for tunicles, and when worn out was sometimes condemned at St. Paul's to be put aside for lining other ritual garments. Among the three meanings for the mediæval "Aresta" one is any kind of covering. It seems, therefore, probable that these cloths of Areste took their name not from the place where they had been woven, but from the use to which they were generally put; namely, for hangings about churches. Moreover, tapestry or Arras work, being thick and heavy, could never have been employed for such light use as that of apparels nor would it have been diapered like silk, yet we find "Areste" to have been so fashioned and so used.

Silks also were distinguished through their colours and shades of colours: and the men who drew up the mediæval inventories seem to have been gifted with a keen eye for varieties of shades and tints. For instance, a chasuble at St. Paul's is set down, late in the thirteenth century, as made of samit dyed in a purple somewhat bordering on a blood-red tone. Tarsus colour is often mentioned: and it was, probably, some shade of purple. The people of Tarsus no doubt got from their murex, a shell-fish of the class mollusca and purpurifera family to be found on their coast,

their dyeing matter; and when we remember what changes are wrought in the animal itself by the food it eats, and what strong effects are made by slight variations in climate, even atmosphere, upon materials for colouring in the moment of application, we may easily understand how the difference arose between the two tints of purple.

"Cloth of Tarsus" itself was of a rare and costly kind, of fine goats' hair and silk. The tint was some shade of royal purple. Chaucer tells us that

> The great Emetrius, the king of Inde,
> Upon a stede bay, trapped in stele,
> Covered with cloth of gold diapred wele,
> Came riding like the god of armes Mars.
> His cote armure was of a cloth of Tars,
> Couched with perles, etc.

Other cities besides Tarsus gave their names to various shades of purple; according as they were dyed at Antioch, Alexandria, or Naples. Each place had a particular shade which distinguished it from the others. It is not now possible to ascertain what were the exact distinctions of tint. Sky-blue was a colour everywhere in church use for certain festivals throughout England. In the early inventories the name for that tint is "Indicus," "Indus," reminding us of our present *indigo*. In later lists it is called "Blodius," not sanguinary but blue. Murrey, or a reddish brown, is also often specified.

Silks woven of two colours, so that one of them showed itself unmixed and quite distinct on one side, and the second appeared equally clear on the other—a thing sometimes now looked upon as a wonder in modern weaving—might occasionally be met with here at the mediæval period: Exeter cathedral had, in 1327, a silk cloth "of red colour inside and yellow outside." At York, in 1543, there was "a vestment of changeable silke," "besides one of changeable taffety for Good Friday."

Marble silk had a weft of several colours so woven as to make

the whole web look like marble, stained with a variety of tints. There were many such vestments in old St. Paul's. During full three centuries this marble silk found great favour among us; for Henry Machyn, in his curious diary, tells us how "the old qwyne of Schottes rod thrught London," and how "then cam the lord tresorer with a C. gret horsse and ther cotes of marbull," etc., to meet her the 6th of November, 1551.

CHAPTER VIII.

We must now speak of embroidery. The art of working with the needle flowers, fruits, human and animal forms, or any fanciful design, upon webs woven of silk, linen, cotton, wool, hemp, besides other kinds of stuff, is of the highest antiquity.

Those patterns, after so many fashions, which we see figured upon the garments worn by men and women on Egyptian and Assyrian monuments, but especially on the burned-clay vases made and painted by the Greeks in their earliest as well as in later times, or which we read about in the writings of that people, were not wrought in the loom, but worked by the needle.

The old Egyptian loom—and that of the Jews must have been like it—was, as we know from paintings, of the simplest shape, and seems to have been able to do little more diversified in design than straight lines in different colours; and at best nothing higher in execution than checker-work: beyond this, all was put in by hand with the needle. In Paris, at the Louvre, are several pieces of early Egyptian webs coloured, drawings of which have been published by Sir Gardner Wilkinson in his work 'The Egyptians in the time of the Pharaohs.' There are two pieces wrought up and down with needlework; the second piece of blue is figured all over in white embroidery with a pattern of netting, the meshes of which shut in irregular cubic shapes, and in the lines of the reticulation the mystic "fylfot" is seen. Sir J. G. Wilkinson says of them: "They are mostly cotton, and, though

their date is uncertain, they suffice to show that the manufacture was Egyptian; and the many dresses painted on the monuments of the eighteenth dynasty show that the most varied patterns were used by the Egyptians more than 3000 years ago, as they were at a later period by the Babylonians, who became noted for their needlework."

It is clear from the book of Exodus that the Israelites from very early times, having learnt the art in Egypt, embroidered their garments; although the word "embroidery" which occurs so frequently in every English version probably sometimes means merely weaving in stripes, and not work with the needle. The embroidering also of the sails of vessels was not uncommon in the east; boats used in sacred festivals on the Nile were so decorated; and the prophet Ezekiel says to the people of Tyre, "Fine linen with broidered work from Egypt, was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail." The reader will here also remember Shakspeare's description of the barge of Cleopatra;

> The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne
> Burned on the water:
> Purple the sails, and so perfumed, that
> The winds were love-sick with them; she did lie
> In her pavilion, cloth of gold, of tissue, etc.

Pliny says that the Phrygians invented embroidery, and that garments so ornamented were called Phrygionic. Of such a fashion were "the art-wrought vests of splendid purple tint" brought forth by Dido, and the cloak given by Andromache to Ascanius. Hence, an embroiderer was called in Latin "Phrygio," and needlework "Phrygium" or "Phrygian" work. When the design, as often happened, was wrought in solid gold wire or golden thread, the embroidery so worked was named "auriphrygium." From this term comes the old English word "orphrey."

While Phrygia in general, Babylon in particular (as Pliny also tells us) became celebrated for the beauty of its embroideries. All who have seen the sculptures in the British museum brought

from Nineveh, and described and figured by Layard, must have remarked how lavishly the Assyrians adorned their robes with the needlework for which one of their greatest cities was so famous. Up to the first century of our era the reputation which Babylon had won for her textiles and needlework still lived. We know from Josephus, who had often been to worship at Jerusalem, that the veils of the Temple were Babylonian; and of the outer one that writer says: "there was a veil of equal largeness with the door. It was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with blue and fine linen, and scarlet and purple, and of a texture that was wonderful."

What the Jews did for the Temple we may be sure was done by Christians for the Church. The faithful, however, went even furth , and wore garments figured all over with sacred subjects in embroidery. We learn this from a stirring sermon preached by St. Asterius, bishop of Amasia in Pontus, in the fourth century. Taking for his text "a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen" he upbraids the world for its follies in dress, and complains that some people went about arrayed like painted walls, with beasts and flowers all over them; while others, pretending a more serious tone of thought, dressed in clothes depicting the doings and wonders of our Lord. "Strive," St. Asterius exhorts them, "to follow in your lives the teachings of the Gospel, rather than have the miracles of our Redeemer embroidered upon your outward dress." To have had so many subjects shown upon one garment it is clear that each must have been done very small, and wrought in outline; a style which is being brought back, with great effect, into modern ecclesiastical use.

The discriminating accuracy with which our old writers noted the several kinds of textile gifts bestowed upon a church is as instructive as praiseworthy. Ingulph did not think it enough to say that abbot Egelric had given many hangings to the church at Croyland, the great number of which were silken, but he explains

also that some were ornamented with birds wrought in gold and sewed on; in fact, of cut-work; others with those birds woven into the stuff; others quite plain. We find the same care taken in old inventories.

By the latter end of the thirteenth century embroidery obtained for its several styles and various sorts of ornamentation a distinguishing and technical nomenclature. One of the earliest documents in which we meet with this set of terms is the inventory drawn up, in 1295, of the vestments belonging to St. Paul's cathedral, printed by Dugdale: herein, the "opus plumarium," the "opus pectineum," the "opus pulvinarium," "consutum de serico," "de serico consuto," may be severally found.

"Opus plumarium" was the then usual term for what is now commonly called embroidery; and was given to needlework of this kind because the stitches were laid down longwise and not across: that is, so put together that they seemed to overlap one another like the feathers in the plumage of a bird. This style was aptly called "feather-stitch" work, in contradistinction to that done in cross and tent stitch, or the "cushion-style."

The "opus pulvinarium," or "cushion-style," was like the modern so-called Berlin work. As now, so then it was done in the same stitching with pretty much the same materials and generally, if not always, put to the same purpose; for cushions, to sit or to kneel upon in church or to uphold the mass-book at the altar; hence its name of "cushion-style." In working it silken thread is known to have been often used. Among other specimens, and in silk, there is a beautiful cushion of a date corresponding to the London inventory at South Kensington, no. 1324. Being well adapted for working heraldry this stitch has been used from an early period for the purpose; and emblazoned orphreys, like the narrow hem on the Syon cope, were wrought in it.

The "opus pectineum" was a kind of woven work imitative of embroidery, and employed to supply it. John Garland, in his

dictionary, explains that it was made by means of a comb, or some comb-like instrument: and from this the work itself received the distinctive appellation of "pectineum," or comb-wrought. Before John Garland left England for France, to teach a school there, he must have often seen his countrywomen at such an occupation; and the amice given by Katherine Lovell to St. Paul's, "de opere pectineo," may perhaps have been the work of her own hands.

Women in the middle ages were so ready at the needle that they could make their embroidery look as if it had been done in the loom, really woven. A shred of crimson cendal figured in gold and silver thread with a knight on horseback, armed as of the latter time of Edward the first, was shown to us some time ago. At first sight the mounted warrior seemed to have been not hand-worked but woven; so flat, so even was every thread. Looking at it however through a glass and turning it about, we found it to have been embroidered by the finger in such a way that the stitches laid down upon the surface were carried through into the canvas lining at the back of the thin silk. In this same manner all the design, both before and behind, upon the fine English-wrought chasuble at South Kensington, no. 673, was probably worked.

At the latter end of the thirteenth century our countrywomen invented a new way of embroidery. Without giving up altogether the old "opus plumarium" or feather-stitch, they mixed it with a new style, both of needlework and mechanism. So beautiful was the novel method deemed abroad that it won for itself the complimentary appellation of "opus Anglicum," or English work. In what its peculiarity consisted has long been a question and a puzzle among foreign archæological writers; and a living one of eminence, M. Voisin, noticing a cope of English work given to the church of Tournai, says: "Il serait curieux de savoir quelle broderie ou quel tissu on designait sous le nom de *opus Anglicum.*"

But if we examine that very fine piece of English needlework, the Syon cope, at South Kensington, no. 9182, we find that the first stitches for the human face were begun in the centre of the cheek, and worked in circular lines; falling (after the further side had been made) into straight lines, which were so carried on through the rest of the fleshes; in some instances, also, through the draperies. But this was done in a sort of chain-stitch, and a newly practised mechanical appliance was brought into use. After the whole figure had thus been wrought with this kind of chain-stitch in circles and straight lines, then with a little thin iron rod ending in a small bulb or smooth knob slightly heated, those middle spots in the faces that had been worked in circular lines were pressed down; and the deep wide dimples in the throat, especially of aged persons. By the hollows thus lastingly sunk a play of light and shadow is brought out, which at a short distance lends to the portion so treated the appearance of low relief. Chain-stitch, then, worked in circular lines and relief given to parts by hollows sunk into the faces and other portions of the persons, constitute the elements of the "opus Anglicum," or embroidery after the English manner. How the chain-stitch was worked into circles for the faces, and straight lines for the rest of the figures, is well shown by a woodcut, after a portion of the Steeple Aston embroideries, given in the archæological journal, vol iv. p. 285.

Although not merely the faces and the extremities but the dresses also of the persons figured were generally wrought in chain-stitch, and afterwards treated as we have just described, another practice was to work the draperies in feather-stitch, which was also employed for the grounding, and diapered after a simple, zigzag design; as we find in the Syon cope.

How highly English embroideries were at one period appreciated by foreigners may be gathered from the especial notice taken of them abroad; as we may find in continental documents. Matilda, queen of William the conqueror, carried away from the



Part of the orphrey of the Syon cope.

abbey of Abingdon its richest vestments, and would not be put off with inferior ones. In his will A. D. 1360 cardinal Talairand, bishop of Albano, speaks of the English embroideries on a

costly set of white vestments. A bishop of Tournai, in 1343, bequeathed to that cathedral an old English cope, as well as a beautiful corporal "of English work." Among the copes reserved for prelates' use in the chapel of Charles duke of Bourgogne, brother-in-law to John duke of Bedford, there was one of English work very elaborately fraught with many figures, as appears from this description of it: "une chappe de brodeure d'or, façon d'Engleterre, à plusieurs histoires de N.D. et anges et autres ymages, estans en laceures escriptes, garnie d'un orfroir d'icelle façon fait à apostres, desquelles les manteulx sont tous couves de perles, et leur diadesmes pourphiler de perles, estans en manière de tabernacles, faits de deux arbres, dont les tiges sont touts couvertes de perles, et à la dite chappe y a une bille des dites armes, garnie de perles comme la dessus dicte."

While so coveted abroad, our English embroidery was highly prized and well paid for at home. We find in the Issue Rolls that Henry the third had a chasuble embroidered by Mabilia of Bury St. Edmund's; and that Edward the second paid a hundred marks to Rose the wife of John de Bureford, a citizen and mercer of London, for a choir-cope of her embroidering, and which was to be sent to the Pope as an offering from the queen.

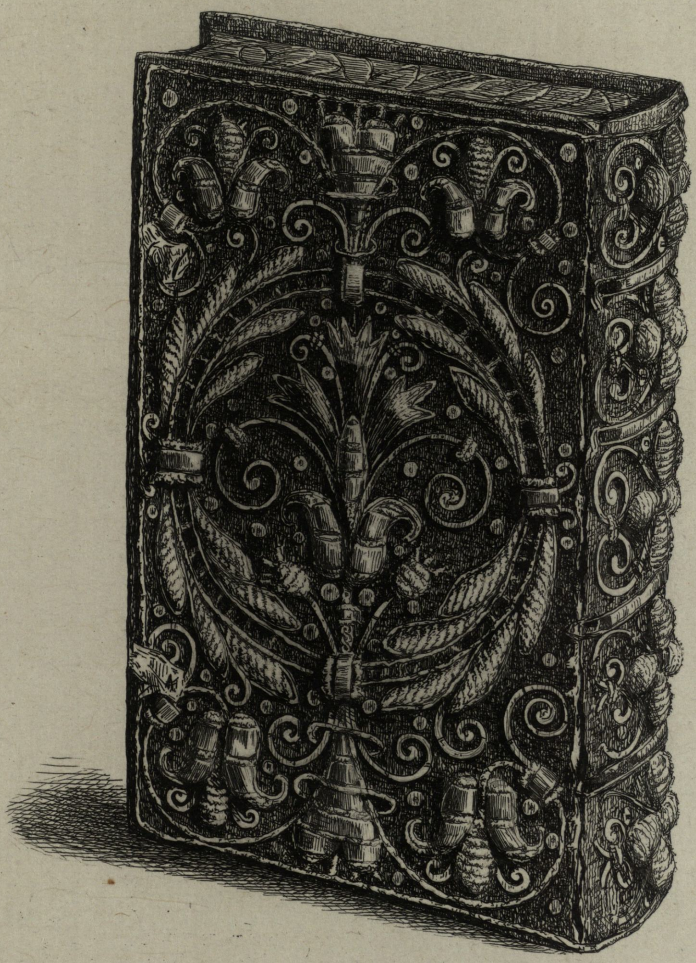
English embroidery afterwards lost its first high reputation. Through those years wasted with the wars of the Roses the work of the English needle was very poor, very coarse, and, so to say, ragged; as, for instance, the chasuble at South Kensington, no. 4045. Nothing of the celebrated chain-stitch with dimpled faces in the figures can be found about it: every part is worked in the feather-stitch, slovenly put down. During the early part of the seventeenth century our embroiderers again struck out a new style, which consisted in throwing up the figures a good height above the grounding. Of this raised work there is a fine specimen in the fourth of the copes preserved in the chapter library at Durham. It is said to have been wrought for and given by Charles the first to that cathedral. This red silk vestment is well

sprinkled with bodiless cherubic heads crowned with rays and borne up by wings ; while upon the hood is David, holding in one hand the head of Goliah ; the whole done in highly raised embroidery. Bibles of the large folio size, covered in rich silk or satin and embroidered with the royal arms done in bold raised-work, are still to be found in our libraries. More than one of these volumes is said to have been a gift from the king to a forefather of the present owner.

This style of raised embroidery remained in use for many years. Not only large Bibles but smaller volumes, especially prayer-books, had bindings enriched with it. Generally such examples are attributed, and in most cases wrongly, to the so-called nuns of Little Gidding. The same kind of work is sometimes found on the broad frames of old looking-glasses : setting forth perhaps, as in the specimen no. 892, the story of Ahasuerus and Esther, or a passage in some courtship carried on after the manners of Arcadia.

Few people at the present day have a just idea of the labour, the money, and the length of time often bestowed of old upon embroideries, which had been sketched as well as wrought by the hands of men, each in his own craft the ablest and most cunning of his time. In behalf of England plenty of evidence has been produced already : as a proof of the same labour elsewhere a remarkable passage may be quoted, given, in his life of Antonio Pollaiuolo, by Vasari : "For San Giovanni in Florence there were made certain very rich vestments after the design of this master, all of gold-wove velvet with pile upon pile (di broccato riccio sopra riccio), each woven of one entire piece and without seam, embroidered with the most subtile mastery of that art by Paolo da Verona, a man most eminent of his calling, and of incomparable ingenuity. This work took twenty-six years for its completion, being wholly in close stitch (questi ricami fatti con punto serrato) ; but the excellent method of which is now all but lost, the custom being in these days to make the stitches much wider (il punteg-

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IV



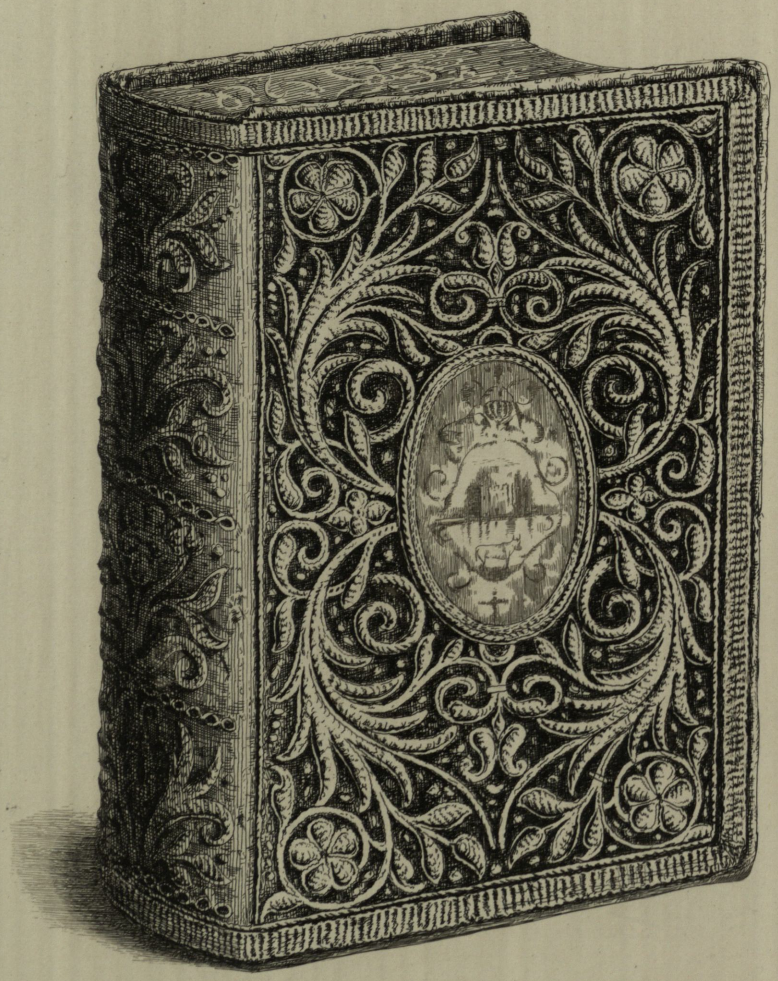
OCTAVO BOOK. AUGSBURG 1613. BINDING RICHLY EMBROIDERED IN GOLD THREAD ON MAROON VELVET GROUND L.6¼IN. W 4IN.

S. K. M. (No 4537) W.E MACKANESS. FECIT,

VICTORIA AND ALBERT
LIBRARY



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VII



DUTCH BIBLE IN OCTAVO, (LEYDEN 1619), EMBROIDERED BINDING IN GOLD THREAD ON MAROON VELVET GROUND. L. 7 IN. W. 4⅞ IN. S. K. M. (NO. 4538). R.L. STEVENSON FECIT.

giare piu largo), whereby the work is rendered less durable and much less pleasing to the eye." These vestments may yet be seen framed and glazed in presses around the sacristy of San Giovanni. Antonio died in 1498. The magnificent cope before referred to, now at Stonyhurst, is of one seamless piece of gorgeous gold tissue figured with bold wide-spreading foliage in crimson velvet, pile upon pile, and dotted with small gold spots; probably it came from the same loom that threw off these famous San Giovanni vestments.



Embroidered Saddle-cloth of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER IX.

THE old English "opus consutum" or cut-work, called in French "appliqué," is a term of rather wide meaning, as it takes in several sorts of decorative accompaniments to needlework.

When anything—flower, fruit, or figure—is wrought by itself upon a separate piece of silk or canvas and afterwards sewed on to the vestment for church use, or article for domestic purpose, it comes to be known as cut-work. This kind of work was employed for dresses and vestments; but we find it most commonly on bed-curtains, hangings for rooms and halls, and other items in household furniture.

Of cut-work in embroidery those pieces of splendid Rhenish needlework with the blazonment of Cleves, sewed upon a ground of crimson silk, nos. 1194-5, at South Kensington, and the chasuble of crimson double-pile velvet, no. 78, are good examples. In the last, the niches in which the saints stand are loom-wrought, but those personages themselves are exquisitely worked on separate pieces of fine canvas and afterwards let into the unwoven spaces left open for them. A Florentine piece of cut-work, no. 5788, is alike remarkable for its great beauty and the skill shown in bringing together both weaving and embroidery. Much of the architectural accessories is loom-wrought, while the extremities of the evangelists are all done by the needle; but the head, neck, and long beard are worked by themselves upon very fine linen, and afterwards put together in such a way that the full white beard overlaps the tunic.

Other methods gave a quicker help in this cut-work. For the sake of expedition all the figures were sometimes at once shaped out of woven silk, satin, velvet, linen, or woollen cloth as wanted, and sewed upon the grounding of the article: the features of the face and the contours of the body were then wrought by the needle in very narrow lines done in brown silk thread. At times, even this much of embroidery was set aside for the painting brush, and instances are to be found in which the spaces left uncovered by the loom for the heads and extremities of the human figures are filled in with the brush. Sometimes, again, the cut-work done in these ways is framed, as it were, with an edging, either in plain or gilt leather, hempen, or silken cord, like the leadings of a stained glass window. Perhaps in no collection open anywhere to public view can a piece of cut-work be found so full of teaching about the process of this easy way of execution as no. 1370 at South Kensington: and we earnestly recommend the attention of our readers to that example.

For the invention of cut-work, or "di commesso" as Vasari calls it, that writer tells us we are indebted to one of his Florentine countrymen: "It was by Sandro Botticelli that the method of preparing banners and standards in what is called cut-work was invented; and this he did that the colours might not sink through, showing the tint of the cloth on each side. The baldachino of Orsanmichele is by this master, and is so treated, etc." But Vasari is not correct: the piece just spoken of, no. 1370, was made half a century before Botticelli was born.

There are other accessories in mediæval embroidery which ought not to be overlooked.

In some few instances, gold and silver gilt star-like flowers are to be found sewed upon the silks or amid the embroidery from Venice and other provinces in Italy, and from southern Germany. Some fragments of silk damask, no. 8612, are curious examples of Italian taste. These at one time have been thickly strewed with

trefoils cut out of gilt metal but very thin, and not sewed but glued on to the silk: many of the leaves have fallen off, and those remaining turned black. Precious stones also, coral, and seed pearls were sewed upon textiles; and, not uncommonly, small coloured beads and bugles of glass. Belonging to St. Paul's, in 1295, among many other amices there was one having glass stones upon it, both large and small.

Another form of glass fastened by heat to gold and copper, enamel, was extensively employed as an adornment upon textiles. The gorgeous "chesable of red cloth of gold with orphreys before and behind set with pearls, blue, white, and red, with plates of gold enamelled, wanting fifteen plates, etc.," described in Dugdale's Monasticon, and given by John of Gaunt's duchess to Lincoln cathedral, shows how this rich ornamentation was applied to garments, especially for church use, in very large quantities.

In England the old custom was to sew a great deal of goldsmith's work, for enrichment, upon articles meant for personal wear. When our first Edward's grave in Westminster abbey was opened in 1774 there was seen upon the body, besides other silken robes, a stole-like band of rich white tissue about the neck and crossed upon the breast: it was studded with gilt quatrefoils in filigree work and embroidered with pearls. From the knees downwards the body was wrapped in a pall of cloth of gold. Henry the third gave a frontal to the high altar in Westminster abbey upon which, besides carbuncles in golden settings and several large pieces of enamel, were as many as 866 smaller ones: perhaps the "esmaux de plique" of the French.

In the Norman-French silken stuffs thus ornamented were said to be "batuz," that is, beaten with hammered-up gold. The Treasury calendars, edited by Palgrave, tell us that Richard the second gave to the chapel in the castle of Haverford "ii rydell batuz;" two altar-curtains beaten (probably with ornaments in gilt silver; like an amice so described which belonged to St. Paul's).

For the secular employment of this same sort of decoration we have several curious examples. Ladies' dresses were so adorned, as we may see in these verses:

> A coronell on hur hedd sett,
> Hur clothys wyth bestes and byrdes wer bete,
> All abowte for pryde.

King John in 1215 sent an order (extant in the Close rolls) to Reginald de Cornhull and William Cook to have made for him,



Ancient banner of the city of Strasburg: see next page.

besides five tunics, five banners with his arms upon them, well beaten in gold: "bene auro batuatas." A very remarkable example attributed to the fourteenth century "the banner of Strasbourg" was preserved there until very lately, when it was unhappily destroyed in the bombardment of that city in 1870.

Dugdale (in his Baronage) gives the original bill for fitting out one of the ships in which Beauchamp earl of Warwick, during the reign of Henry the sixth, went over to France. Among other items are these: "Four hundred pencils (long narrow strips of silk, used as flags) beat with the raggedstaff in silver; the other pavys (one of two shields probably of wood, and fastened outside the ship at its bows) painted with black, and a raggedstaff beat with silver occupying all the field; one coat for my lord's body, beat with fine gold; two coats for heralds, beat with demi gold; a great streamer for a ship of forty yeards in length and eight yeards in breadth, with a great bear and griffin holding a raggedstaff poudred full of raggedstaffs; three penons (small flags) of satten; sixteen standards of worsted entailed with the bear and a chain." The quatrefoils on the robe of Edward the first, the silver lions on the Glastonbury cope, the beasts and birds on the lady's gown, the bear and griffin and raggedstaff belonging to the Beauchamp's blazoning, and all similar enrichments put upon silken stuffs, were cut out of very thin plates of gold or silver, so as to hang upon them lightly, and were hammered up to show in low relief the fashion of the flower and the lineaments of the beast or bird meant to be represented. Such a style of ornamentation in gold or silver, stitched on silken stuffs, was far more common once than is now thought. It had also a technical description: in speaking of it people would either write or say, "silk beaten with gold or silver;" as, for example, Barbara Mason used the term when in 1538 she bequeathed to a church "a vestment of grene sylke betyn with goold."

Spangles, when they happened to be used, were not like those



8867.

EMBROIDERY, SILK & GOLD.

Under a Gothic canopy &c. — German late 15th Century.



now employed but fashioned after another and artistic shape, and put on in a different manner. A fragment still exists from the chasuble belonging to the set of vestments wrought, it is said, by Isabella of Spain and her maids of honour; and used the first time high mass was sung in Granada, after it had been taken by the Spaniards from the Moors. Upon this are flowers, well thrown up in relief, done in spangles on a crimson velvet ground. The spangles—some in gold, some in silver—are, though small, of several sizes; all are voided; that is, hollow in the middle; with the circumference not flat but convex, and are sewed on like tiles, one overlapping the other, producing a rich and pleasing effect. Our present spangles, in the flat shape, are quite modern.

Another kind of embroidery for garments was in gold, worked sometimes by itself, sometimes with coloured silk thread laid down alternately beside it; so as to lend a tinge of green, crimson, pink, or blue to the imagined tissue of the robe, as if it were made of a golden stuff shot with another tint.

This gold "passing" was sewn on. The workwomen taking thin silk, while fastening the passing, dotted it all over in small stitches set exactly in a way that showed the same pattern. With no other appliance they were thus enabled to lend to their draperies the appearance of having been not wrought by the needle but actually cut out of a piece of textile; for which they have been sometimes mistaken.

Anciently, also, in England another mode of embroidering articles, either for church use or for household furniture, was by darning or working the subject upon linen netting. This was called net-work, filatorium, as we learn from the Exeter inventory, where we read that its cathedral possessed in 1327 three pieces of it for use at the altar: one in particular for throwing over the desk. These thread embroideries were chiefly wrought during the fourteenth century; but as early as 1295 St. Paul's had a cushion of the kind.

Crochet, knitting done with linen thread, and the thick kinds of lace wrought (chiefly in Flanders) upon the cushion with bobbins, were much employed under the name of nun's



Embroidered hangings of a bed; from a MS. of the fifteenth century, in the British museum.

lace from the sixteenth century and upwards, for bordering altar-cloths, albs, and every sort of towel required for church purposes.

CHAPTER X.

TAPESTRY is neither real weaving nor true embroidery, but in a manner unites in its working those two processes into one. Though wrought in a loom and upon a warp stretched out along its frame, it has no woof thrown across those threads with a shuttle or any like appliance but its weft is done with many short threads, all variously coloured and put in by a needle. It is not embroidery, though so very like it, for tapestry is not worked upon what is really a web, having both warp and woof, but upon a series of closely set fine strings.

From the way in which tapestry is spoken of in Holy Writ we may be sure that the art is very old; and if it did not take its first rise in Egypt, we are led by the same authority to conclude that it soon became successfully cultivated by the people of that land. The woman in the book of Proverbs says: "I have woven my bed with cords. I have covered it with painted tapestry, brought from Egypt." We find, therefore, not only that it was employed as an article of household furniture among the Israelites, but that the Egyptians were the makers.

From Egypt through western Asia the art of tapestry-making found its way to Europe, and after many ages at last to England. Among the other manual labours followed in religious houses this handicraft was one; and monks became some of the best workmen. The altars and the walls of their churches were hung with tapestry. Matthew Paris tells us that among other ornaments

which, in the reign of Henry the first, abbot Geoffrey had made for his church of St. Alban's were three reredoses; the first a large one wrought with the finding of the body of St. Alban; the other two figured with the parables of the man who fell among thieves, and of the prodigal son. While in London in the year 1316 Simon abbot of Ramsey bought looms, staves, shuttles, and a slay: "pro weblomes emptis xx^{s}. Et pro staves ad easdem vj^{d}. Item pro iiij shittles pro eodem opere ij^{s} vj^{d}. Item in j. slay pro textoribus viij^{d}." Collier, in his history, quotes a letter from Giffard, one of the commissioners for the suppression of the smaller houses, written to Cromwell; in which he says, speaking of the monastery of Wolstrope in Lincolnshire: "Not one religious person there but that he can and doth use either imbrothering, writing books with very fair hand, making their own garments, carving, painting, or graving, etc."

We may collect from Chaucer that working tapestry was not an uncommon trade; among his pilgrims he mentions in the prologue,

> An haberdasher and a carpenter,
> A webbe, a dyer, and a tapisser.

Pieces of English-made tapestry still remain. That fine though greatly damaged specimen at St. Mary's hall, Coventry, representing the marriage of Henry the sixth, is one; a second is the curious reredos for an altar, belonging to the vintner's company; this last is figured with St. Martin on horseback cutting his cloak in two that he might give one half to a poor man, and with St. Dunstan singing mass. A third piece, of large size and in good preservation, is in private possession, and hangs upon the wall in a house in Cornwall. It is one of four pieces, of which two have been lost, representing the marriage of Henry the seventh and Elizabeth of York; and was probably made about the year 1490.

The art of weaving tapestry was successfully followed in many parts of France and throughout ancient Flanders; where secular

trade-guilds were formed for its especial manufacture in many of the towns. Several of these places won for themselves an especial



Banner of the tapestry workers of Lyons.

fame; but so far, at last, did Arras outrun them all that arras-work came to be the common word, both here and on the continent, to mean all sorts of tapestry, whether wrought in England or abroad. Thus the fine hangings for the choir of Canterbury cathedral, now at Aix-en-Provence, though probably made at home by his own monks and given to that church by prior Goldston in 1595, are spoken of as arras-work: "de arysse subtiliter intextos."

Arras is but one among other terms by which, during the middle ages, tapestry was called. Its earliest name was Saracenic work; "opus Saracenicum;" and, at first, tapestry was wrought as in the east, in a low or horizontal loom. The artisans of France and Flanders were the first to introduce the upright or vertical frame, afterwards known abroad as "de haute lisse," in contradistinction to the low or horizontal frame called "de basse lisse." Workmen who kept to the unimproved loom were known, in the trade, as Saracens, for retaining the method of their paynim teachers; and their work, Saracenic. In the year 1339 John de Croisettes, a Saracen-tapestry worker living at Arras, sells to the duke of

Touraine a piece of gold Saracenic tapestry figured with the story of Charlemagne: "Jean de Croisettes, tapissier Sarrazinois demeurant à Arras, vend au duc de Touraine un tapis sarrazinois à or de l'histoire de Charlemaine." The high frame, however, soon superseded the low one; and among the pieces of tapestry belonging to Philippe duke of Bourgogne and Brabant many are especially entered as of the high frame; one of which is thus described: "ung grant tapiz de haulte lice, sauz or, de l'istoire du duc Guillaume de Normandie comment il conquist Engleterre." A very fine example is still to be seen in the collection at the Louvre, representing the history of St. Martin.



The legend of St. Martin.—From a piece of tapestry of the fourteenth century in the Louvre.

With the upright, as with the flat frame, the workman had to grope in the dark a great deal upon his path. In both, he was obliged to put in the threads on the back or wrong side of the piece, following his sketch as best he could behind the strings or warp. As the face was downward in the flat frame it was much less easy to observe and correct a fault. In the upright frame he might go in front, and with his own work in open view on one hand and the original design full before him on the other, he could mend as he went on, step by step, the smallest mistake, were it but a single thread. Put side by side, when finished, the pieces from the upright frame were in beauty and perfection far beyond those from the flat one. We can scarcely particularize the details in which that superiority consisted, for not one single flat sample is to be identified as certain from evidence within our reach. It is possible that at South Kensington the specimens nos. 1296 and 1465 are "Saracenic;" that is, wrought in the low flat loom, or "de basse lisse;" but all the rest are of the "de haute lisse," worked in the upright frame. The "weaver" is among the trades engraved in the curious volume printed at Frankfort in 1574, *de mechanicis artibus*, with plates by Amman.

When the illuminators of manuscripts began to put in golden shadings all over their painting the tapestry-workers did the same. Such a manner cannot be relied on as a criterion whereby to judge of the exact place where any specimen of tapestry had been wrought, or to tell its precise age. To work figures on a golden ground and to shade garments, buildings, and landscapes with gold, are two different things. Upon several pieces at South Kensington gold thread has been very plentifully used, but the metal is of so debased a quality that it has become almost black.

The use of tapestry for church decoration and household furniture, both in England and abroad, was for a long period very great. Many large pieces, mostly of a scriptural character, were provided by cardinal Wolsey for his palace at Hampton court. In the next generation, a very famous set was made in



The Weaver; from the engraving by J. Amman.

Flanders, which for many years decorated the walls of the House of Lords : it represented the defeat of the Spanish Armada. This magnificent memorial was destroyed in the fire of 1834. One fragment only is known to exist. This piece was cut out to make way for a gallery at the time of the trial of queen Caroline, and was secreted by a German servant of the Lord Chamberlain. The relic was bought some years after for £20 and presented to the corporation of Plymouth, who still possess it.

The most beautiful series now in the world is in the Vatican at Rome, and may be judged of by looking at a few of the original cartoons (at present in the S. K. museum). Duke Cosimo tried to set up tapestry work at Florence but did not succeed. Later, Rome produced some good things; among others, the fine copy of Da Vinci's Last Supper still hung up on Maunday Thursday. Eng-

land made several attempts to re-introduce the manufacture: first at Mortlake, then afterwards in London, at Soho. Works from these two establishments may be met with. At Northumberland house there was a room hung with large pieces of tapestry wrought at Soho, and for that mansion, in the year 1758. The designs were by Francesco Zuccherelli and consisted of landscapes composed of hills crowned here and there with the standing ruins of temples or strewed with broken columns, among which groups of country folks are wandering and amusing themselves. Mortlake and Soho were failures. Not so the Gobelins at Paris, as every one well knows.

In many English houses, especially in the country, good samples of late Flemish tapestry may be found. Close to London, Holland house is adorned with some curious specimens, particularly in the raised style. An earlier example (engraved on the next page) of the fifteenth century, representing the marriage of Louis XII. and Anne of Brittany is in a foreign collection.

Imitated tapestry existed here long ago under the name of "stayned cloth," and the workers of it were embodied into a London guild. At the beginning of the sixteenth century Exeter cathedral had several pieces of old painted or "stayned" cloth: "i front stayned cum crucifixo, Maria et Johanne, Petro et Paulo; viij panni linei stayned, etc." The great use at that time of such articles in household furniture may be witnessed in the will, 1503, of Katherine lady Hastings who bequeaths, besides several other such pieces, "an old hangin of counterfeit arres of Knollys, which now hangeth in the hall and all such hangyings of old bawdekyn, or lynen paynted as now hang in the chappell." We may also remember that Falstaff speaks of it as an illustration easily understood; he says that his troops are "as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth."

Carpets are akin to tapestry, and though the use of them may perhaps be not so ancient yet is very old. Here, again, we must look to the people of Asia for the finest as well as the earliest



Marriage of Louis XII. and Anne of Brittany.

examples of this textile. Mediæval specimens are rare anywhere, and we are glad to recommend attention to two pieces of that period fortunately in the collection at South Kensington, no. 8649, of the fourteenth century, and no. 8357, of the sixteenth, both of Spanish make.

The chambers of our royal palaces and the chancels of our parish churches used to be strewed with rushes. When however they could afford it the authorities of our cathedrals, even in very

early times, spread the sanctuary with carpets; and at last old tapestry came to be so employed, as now in Italy. Among such coverings for the floor before the altar Exeter had a large piece of Arras cloth figured with the life of the duke of Burgundy, the gift of one of its bishops, Edmund Lacy, in 1420; besides two large carpets, one bestowed by bishop Nevill in 1456, the other, of a chequered pattern, by lady Elizabeth Courtney: "carpet et panni coram altari sternendi; i pannus de Arys de historia ducis Burgundie; i larga carpeta, etc." In an earlier inventory we find that among the "bancaria" or bench-coverings in the choir of the same cathedral, one was a large piece of English-made tapestry with a fretted pattern. It is very probable that as the work of the Record Commission goes on, and our ancient historians are printed, evidence may be found that the looms at work in all our great monasteries among other webs wrought carpets. From existing testimony we believe that such must have been the practice at Croyland, where abbot Egelric (the second of the name) gave to that church, before the year 992, "two large foot-cloths [so carpets were then called] woven with lions to be laid out before the high altar on great festivals, and two shorter ones trailed all over with flowers, for the feast days of the apostles." The quantity of carpeting in our palaces may be seen by the way in which Leland tells us that "my lady the queen's rooms" were strewed with them "when she took her chamber."

CHAPTER XI.

THE value of such a collection of textile fabrics as that at South Kensington can scarcely be overrated. Without such aid it is not possible for the painter or the historian to bring before his own mind, much less bring before another's, a true representation of ancient ceremonies and pageants. Whether his subject be a coronation or a royal marriage, a queen's "taking her chamber," a progress, or a funeral, he cannot correctly set forth the splendour or the details of the occasion, unless he can refer to existing examples of the cloths of gold, the figured velvets, the rich embroidery, or the splendid silks, which used to be worn of old. Take for example nos. 1310 and 8624. Upon these are figured stags with tall branching horns, couchant, chained, upturning their antlered heads to sunbeams darting down upon them amid a shower of rain; and beneath the stags are eagles. This Sicilian textile, woven about the end of the fourteenth century, brings to one's mind the bronze recumbent figure of a king in Westminster abbey. It is that of Richard the second; made for him before his downfall, and by two coppersmiths of London, Nicholas Broker and Godfrey Prest. This effigy, once finely gilt, is as remarkable for its beautiful workmanship as for the elaborate manner in which the cloak and kirtle worn by the king are diapered all over with a pattern, copied from the silken stuff out of which those garments must have been cut for his personal wear while living. The

pattern consists of a sprig of the planta genesta, the humble broom plant—the haughty Plantagenet's device—along with a couchant hart chained and gazing straight forwards, and above it a cloud with rays darting up from behind. These were Richard's favourite cognizances: the one from his grandfather Edward the third; the other from his mother Joan of Kent. It is very probable that the king's dress was of the same kind of silk Sicilian textile as the examples just referred to: and that those very examples are portions of pieces wrought, perhaps at Palermo, for the court of Richard. They are of the same date and they show his devices; the chained hart and the sunbeams issuing from a cloud.

The seemliness, not to say comfort, of private life was improved by the use of textiles. Let the historian contrast the custom even in a royal palace, during the middle ages, with that now followed in every tradesman's home. Then straw and rushes were strewed in houses upon the floor in every room; and Wendover, in his life of St. Thomas, speaks of the king's courtiers platting knots with the litter, and flinging them with a gibe at a man who had been slighted by the prince. Not quite a hundred years later when Eleanor of Castile came to London for her marriage with our first Edward she found her lodgings furnished, under the directions of the Spanish courtiers who had arrived before her, with hangings and curtains of silk around the walls, and carpets spread upon the ground. This offended some of the people; more of them, as Matthew Paris records, laughed at the thought that such costly things were laid down to be walked upon.

Take, again, the famous Syon cope. Not only is it full of interest to writers upon liturgies and rituals but of even more to the herald and genealogist. Covered as its orphreys are with armorial bearings, this cope carries with it evidences as important and as valuable as any contemporary roll of arms; and no inquirer into the pedigrees of the ancient families of the Percies or

Ferrers, of Cliffords or Botelers, and of many others, can afford to neglect it.

We have several records of evidence in courts of law taken from heraldic embroideries upon robes and vestments. In the famous controversy between the houses of Scrope and Grosvenor, in the fourteenth century, inquiries were made and proofs were offered on both sides as to the right of bearing upon their shields the bend *or* upon a field *azure*. Witnesses produced at Westminster corporas cases, copes, and albs embroidered with the arms of Scrope. Chaucer was one of the witnesses; and said he had seen those arms on banners and vestments and commonly called the arms of Scrope. Again; the fact that in her wardrobe was found a vestment embroidered with the royal arms was brought forward to prove the charge of treason against the old countess of Salisbury, the mother of cardinal Pole; and for which crime she was condemned.

Collections of ancient textiles are of still greater use to students of ecclesiastical history and church rituals than even to the secular historian. It is probable that the greater number of the specimens which now exist formed originally portions of sacred vestments and furniture for altars. Formerly so common, fragments even of such cloths and robes have become of very great rarity, especially in England; where for the last two or three centuries the use of the numerous old church-vestments and decorations has entirely ceased.

Again, for example: the three cases nos. 5958, 8329, and 8327 are of the kind known as the "capsella cum serico decenter ornata" of the mediæval writers; small cases or boxes decently fitted up with silk; or the "capsula corporalium," the box in which were kept the corporals or square pieces of fine linen, required for service during holy week. The name as well as the use of this appliance is very old, and both are spoken of in the very ancient 'Ordines Romani' edited by Mabillon. One of these, in the rubric for Good Friday, speaks of the Host as

having been kept in the corporal's case or box: "in capsula corporialium." In England, such small wooden boxes covered with silks and velvets richly embroidered were once employed for the same purpose: and several are mentioned in the Exeter inventories.

The two pyx-cloths, nos. 8342 and 8691, have an especial interest for the student of mediæval liturgy. There was a custom during the middle ages in England, as well as in France and several other countries on the continent, of keeping the Eucharist hung up over the high altar beneath a canopy, within a pyx of gold, silver, ivory, or enamel, mantled with a fine linen cloth or veil. This veil for the pyx was sometimes embroidered with golden thread and coloured silks. Such an one is mentioned in the records of the Exchequer, edited by Palgrave: among the valuables belonging to Richard the second in Haverford castle and sent by the sheriff of Hereford to the exchequer, at the beginning of the reign of Henry the fourth, were "i coupe d'or pour le Corps Ihu Cryst. i towayll ove (avec) i longe parure de mesure la suyte."

Several names were given to this fine linen covering. In the inventory of things taken from Dr. Caius, and in the college of his own founding at Cambridge, are "corporas clothes, with the pix and 'sindon' and canopie." This variety in nomenclature doubtless has led some writers to state that before Mary queen of Scots laid her head upon the block she had a "corporal," strictly so called, bound over her eyes: as it is given in one of our histories of England, "a handkerchief in which the Eucharist had formerly been enclosed." But this bandage must have been the veil for a pyx. As Mary wrought much with her needle, and specimens of her work yet remain at Chatsworth and at Greystock, this piece may have been embroidered by her own hand and perhaps also had been once used.

One of these old English pyx or Corpus Christi cloths, was found a few years ago at the bottom of a chest in Hessett church,

Suffolk. As it is a remarkable specimen of the ingenious handicraft of our mediæval countrywomen it deserves description. To make this pyx-cloth a piece of thick linen, about two feet square, was chosen, and being marked off into small equal widths on all its four edges, the threads at every other space were, both in the warp and woof, pulled out. The checquers or squares so produced were then drawn in by threads tied on the under side, having the shape of stars, so well and delicately worked that, till it had been narrowly looked into, the piece was thought to be guipure lace. An old alb, no. 8710, and an amice, 8307, having the apparels yet remaining upon both, are well worth attention on account of somewhat similar curious ornamental needlework in an intricate manner. In the middle ages in England it was not unusual to suspend upon pastoral staffs, just below the crook, a piece ot fine linen. We see them represented on effigies and in illuminations; but existing examples are of the utmost rarity. Two are at South Kensington: nos. 8279 A, and 8662.

There are also there several specimens of the christening cloaks, anciently in use. These were not only conspicuous in royal christenings but, varying in costliness according to the parent's rank, were handed down in inventories and wills. At the christening of Arthur prince of Wales, eldest son of Henry the eighth, "my lady Cecill, the queen's eldest sister, bare the prince wrapped in a mantell of cremesyn clothe of golde furred with ermyn," etc. Shakespeare makes the shepherd, in the Winter's tale, cry out, "Here's a sight for thee; look thee, a bearing cloth for a squire's child!" A well-to-do tradesman, whose will is printed among the Bury wills, bequeathed in 1648 to his daughter Rose his "beareing cloath, such . . . linnen as is belonginge to infants at their tyme of baptisme."

Small square pieces of embroidered linen are sometimes found in country houses in some old chest, of which the original use is said not to be now known. But in most cases these were made for children's quilts; and very often have the emblems of the

evangelists figured at the corners: reminding us of the nursery rhyme, once common both in England and abroad—

> "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
> Bless the bed that I lie on."

The quilts also for grown people were ornamented in the same way. At Durham, in 1446, in the dormitory of the priory was a quilt "cum iiij or evangelistis in corneriis."

Very few examples now exist of the ceremonial shoe anciently worn by bishops. These were of velvet, or damask, or strong linen embroidered. One is preserved at South Kensington, no. 1290: another, once worn by Waynflete bishop of Winchester, is still at Magdalen college, Oxford. We learn from the York wills that these shoes were a part of the episcopal vestments: bishop Pudsey left his mitre, staff, and sandals, "et cætera episcopalia," to Durham cathedral in 1195. Later the name of "sabatines" was given them; and archbishop Bowet's inventory mentions two pairs: "pro j pare de sabbatones, brouddird et couch' cum perell'; pro j pare de sabbatones de albo panno auri."

Collections of textile fabrics are of the highest value to the artist. There is none, anywhere, so rich or complete as that at South Kensington; and before it was purchased for public use, painters were glad to refer to any scanty collection in private hands, or to old pictures or illuminated manuscripts, or engravings.

But, now, artists may see pieces of the actual stuffs represented in the pictures, say, of the national Gallery. For example: in Orcagna's coronation of the blessed Virgin the blue silk diapered in gold, with flowers and birds, hung as a back ground; our Lord's white tunic diapered in gold with foliage; the mantle of His mother made of the same stuff; St. Stephen's dalmatic of green samit, diapered with golden foliage, are Sicilian in design and copied from the rich silks which came, in the middle of the fourteenth century, from the looms of Palermo. While standing

before Jacopo di Casentino's St. John our eye is drawn to the orphrey on that evangelist's chasuble embroidered, after the Tuscan style, with barbed quatrefoils, shutting in the busts of apostles. Isotta da Ramini, in her portrait by Pietro della Francesca, wears a gown made of velvet and gold like the cut velvets at South Kensington.

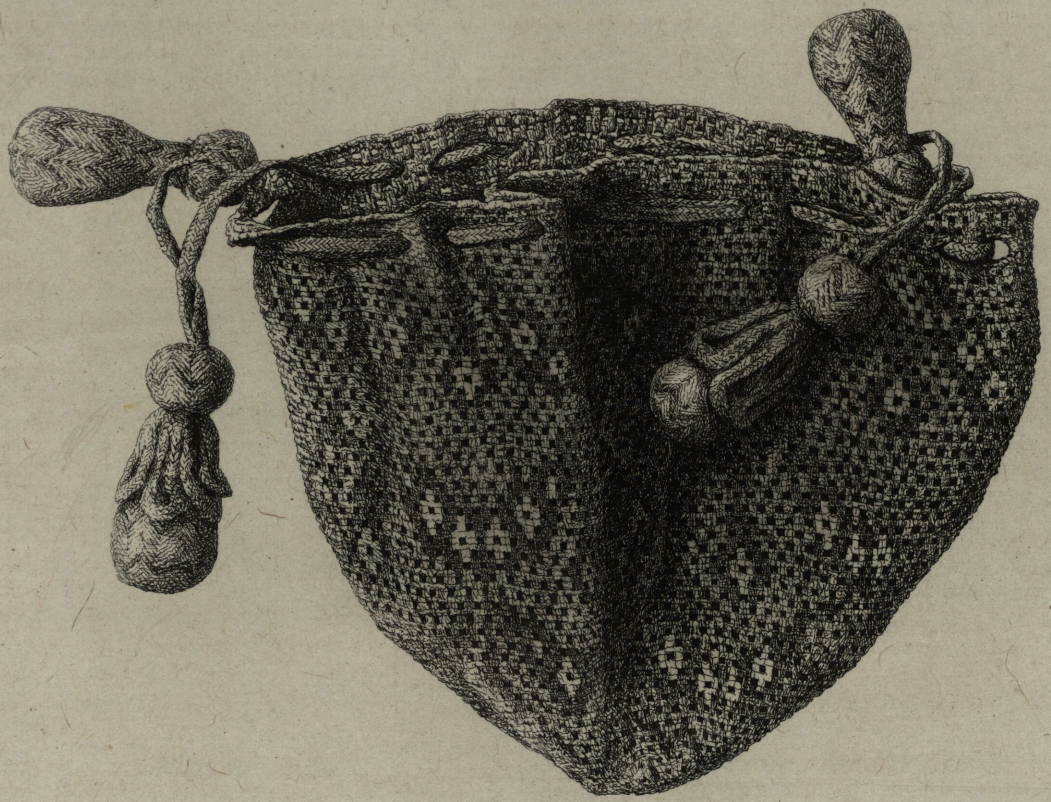
So, again, instead of copying patterns taken from the rich cloth of gold worn by St. Laurence in Francia's picture, or from the mantle of the doge in that by Cappaccio, or from the foot-cloths on the steps in the pictures by Melozzo da Forli, he may find for his authorities in the same collection existing specimens of contemporary and similar fabrics.

Not merely artists of a higher class but decorators also may be equally benefited by the patterns and examples preserved of old wall-hangings and tapestry. From early times up to the middle of the sixteenth century our cathedrals and parish churches, our castles and manorial houses, in short the dwellings of the wealthy everywhere, used to be ornamented with wall-painting done not in "fresco" but in "secco;" that is, distemper. Upon high festivals the walls of the churches were overspread with tapestry and needle-work; so, too, those in the halls of palaces, for some solemn ceremonial.

Warton, in his history of English poetry, gives a passage from Bradshaw's life of St. Werburgh written late in the sixteenth century, from which a few lines are well worth quotation. He is describing how a large hall was arrayed for a great feast:

> All herbes and flowers, fragraunt, fayre and swete
> Were strawed in halles, and layd under theyr fete.
> Clothes of gold and arras were hanged in the hall
> Depaynted with pyctures and hystoryes manyfolde,
> Well wroughte and craftely.

The story of Adam, Noe, and his shyppe; the twelve sones of Jacob; the ten plagues of Egypt, and—



SKM
(20)
V.

PURSE. SILK, GOLD AND SILVER EMBROIDERY. FRENCH. 17TH CENT. S. K. M. (No 520-'69.)
A. A. BRADBURY. FECIT.



Duke Josue was joyned after them in pycture,
* * * * *
Theyr noble actes and tryumphes marcyall
Freshly were browdred in these clothes royall
* * * * *
But over the hye desse in pryncypall place
Where the sayd thre kynges sat crowned all
The best hallynge hanged as reason was,
Whereon were wrought the ix orders angelicall,
Dyvyded in thre ierarchyses, not cessing to call,
Sanctus, *Sanctus*, *Sanctus*, blessed be the Trynite,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth, thre persons in one deyte.

Specimens of tapestry of the later mediæval period may not uncommonly be found: but not so pieces of room hangings, "hallings," such as those at South Kensington, nos. 1370, 1297, and 1465. Similar examples are, we believe, unknown.

We will add a few words only on one other, and that not a trivial, part of ancient dress; namely, gloves. Formerly these were much more ornamented than now; and, when meant for ladies' wear, sometimes perfume was bestowed upon them. Among the new year's day presents to queen Mary, before she came to the throne, was "a payr of gloves embrawret with gold." A year afterwards "x payr of Spanyneshe gloves from a duches in Spayne" came to her; and but a month before, Mrs. Whellers had sent to her highness "a pair of swete gloves." Shakespeare, true to the manners of his day, after making Autolycus chant the praises of his

Lawn as white as driven snow;
Cyprus, black as e'er was crow;
Gloves, as sweet as damask roses;

puts this into the mouth of the shepherdess: "Come, you promised me a tawdry lace, and a pair of sweet gloves." We may find a pair of such gloves in the South Kensington collection, no. 4665.

It may be proper to add, in conclusion, that the greater part



State gloves formerly belonging to Louis XIII.

of the very valuable and extensive collection of mediæval textile fabrics at South Kensington was collected by Dr. Bock, a canon of Aix la Chapelle; and purchased from him about the year 1864.

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